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The University of Toledo
College of Education and Allied Professions
1987 Educational Comment

**THE PRESERVATION OF ETHNIC HERITAGE:
AN EXAMINATION OF THE
BIRMINGHAM EXPERIENCE**

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FORWARD

Place is no longer a constant in the lives of families. There may be some grandparents residing in the old homestead, but grandparents are equally likely to be found in nursing homes, senior citizen housing or a mobile home in a warmer climate. We are a nation whose history, in good measure, has been caused by individuals who have been willing to pull up their roots. Today, that mobility is more pervasive than ever.

European immigrants left their homes to settle in America, and their willingness to give up their home place helped make American History. In many communities created by the new arrivals, such as Toledo's Birmingham neighborhood, the residents had not only a common language but also came from the same village or region. The home place had changed, but the new community contained many and much that had been in Europe.

Many of those once new communities are experiencing a loss of their original settlers or their descendents, those individuals who served as tradition-bearers. They, the churches, and the neighborhood schools they established were the source of learning about their culture's language, folklore, poetry, music and prayers. As those tradition-bearers leave or die, something must be found to fill the great void they leave. Fortunately, in the process of our becoming a more homogeneous nation, there appears to be a growing awareness--particularly among the third generation--that one's roots must not be lost. In a period of social change, many of us appear to recognize that we, individually and as a nation, benefit from maintaining our diverse heritages.

Perhaps it was the Black revolution of the sixties, or Alex Haley in his work *ROOTS*, that taught us that there is a distinction between ancestor worship--the old characterization of the Daughters of The American Revolution--and respect for one's heritage. It is interesting to note not only the growing interest of the grandchildren of immigrants in genealogy but also the recent explosion of "Memory" books--books of unfinished sentences that are to be completed by grandparents--that can be found on the baby book shelves of book stores. We seem to be aware that we have something that should be treasured, that should be taught to those who will come after us.

Thus it is appropriate that a college of education should choose to involve itself in the preservation of ethnic heritage, for one of the prime objectives of education is the transmission of culture. Schools, like families, have the responsibility of teaching the young that which their elders treasure. That treasure must include all that defines a people: their language, along with all their society's means of expression; their concept of what is true and what is beautiful; their celebrations and all the ways of experiencing joy together. Learning about these things are part of what schools and teachers should be all about.

This publication and the activities of The University of Toledo Urban Affairs Center and the Toledo-Lucas County Public Library that preceded it reflect an institutional commitment to preserving heritage. Birmingham, a neighborhood in Toledo with East European roots, has benefitted from this commitment. What is being done there and what might be duplicated else-

where needed to be documented and disseminated. That is justification for this publication.

Thanks to funds provided by the Joint Program of The Ohio Arts and Ohio Humanities Councils, individuals in the Birmingham community who were involved in preserving or documenting the neighborhood's heritage were asked to participate in a monthly lecture series to share what they were doing to preserve ethnic heritage. University scholars were invited to react to those presentations. What follows is a record of those monthly presentations.

It is the hope of all of us involved in this grant that others may learn what Birmingham has to teach us.

John F. Ahern, Editor

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INVOLVING YOUNG PEOPLE IN TRADITIONAL ART FORMS

Baba Ujvagi, Director
The Magyar Dancers

Editor's Note: The first presentation of the monthly lecture series was a demonstration by a group from the Magyar Dancers. Prior to the performance, Baba Ujvagi prepared a display of objects related to Birmingham's heritage. It was necessary to delay the start of the dance program to allow time for the students to change from school clothes to their dance costumes, so Baba used the time to explain the material on display. Her explanation provided an unexpected but very effective introduction to the lecture series.

The preservation of folk art in Birmingham is carried on by a wide variety of people and institutions. The churches are among the most important places where tradition is kept going. First at St. Stephen's and now at Calvin United, for example, Judy Balogh carries on the embroidery tradition. A group of the ladies gets together every Monday at the church for a couple of hours to work on embroidery under Judy's guidance. One of the more popular patterns being worked on now is the Kalocsa pattern as well as the Matyo or Mezokovesd. Judy works very hard at getting the patterns. She brings a lot of them back from Hungary and prints them herself. There is a very interesting technique for printing. One of the ladies in the class is bringing back smocking and teaching that to the rest of the group. Smocking is not an easy thing to do. It takes three hours to pleat the material, if not more, and much less time to do the embroidery. These are several folk arts that are coming back.

One thing that has never really left--and I'm sure a lot of ladies here, maybe you or your mothers, have at one time made them--is the making of "Csiga", seashells. You put them in chicken soup. Women used to make them more often, at least at our church. Just a week ago, some younger women got together to learn to make Csiga, and let me tell you, it's a time consuming process. All this work and it's gone in just a little while! This is the board that you make it on. It has little grooves in it. Then you have this stick which looks sort of like a chop stick with a pointy end. You put a straight square noodle on it and then you just pull it down and it forms a seashell noodle. It takes hours to make a potful.

Things that we should appreciate, especially the people living here in Birmingham, include the palacsinta that most of the churches have. St. Michael's has it a number of times during the year. Holy Rosary has spaghetti dinners. A lot of Italians live in that area, and they make the best spaghetti sauce and home made noodles. Down at our church we have the kolbacz makers, or the sausage makers, a tradition brought back from the old country and continued here.

I have held some classes to teach the Hungarian art of egg painting. Quite a large number of people are interested in relearning this art, not only the Hungarians but Slovaks as well. I know a number of ladies who have done Slovak eggs. They are basically the same method, but the designs are different. The oldest method is where you dye an egg one color, then take a small pocket knife and carve the design on it or etch it in with a bleach-like solution. The second oldest method is the dye and wax method. You start out with the white egg and keep writing on it with this wax writing utensil. You dip it into the lightest color first and then into the darker colors, and at the very end, you take off all the wax, and you get a nice surprise. You get a very beautiful egg. Now these are all raw eggs; very seldom did they blow the yoke out. The most modern method is to paint with a paint brush on a white egg that is blown. Often they are done in the Kalocsa pattern. Egg painting is coming back into the neighborhood. Very few people were doing it before. Another folk art form which I do a lot of is "pingalas," folk painting. I have a big oak chest at home which is painted in the Kalocsa motif.

The Szalonna Sutes, the bacon grease bread that we sell at our festivals, goes back to the herdsmen. It is sometimes served as supper for shepherds in Hungary. Szalonna Sutes is still made not only here but in many Hungarian communities in the United States.

Back in the sixties, the neighborhood would hold a "fevonulas," a Harvest Dance parade. A few years ago the Hungarian dancers brought back this tradition where people dress up in nice costumes, there is a band on a truck, a wagon, the Hungarian gypsy band, of course, and everyone parades through the neighborhood to the hall where the dance is held. Here the dancers steal the grapes, and those who get caught are taken to the judge. He charges you a fine for stealing the grapes.

The Magyar Dancers have been together now for three and one half years. We started out basically as a church group at Calvin and now we have members from all over the neighborhood. A few are not even of Hungarian background. Some of the people in the older group come from all across town--Genoa, the West End--not just here in the Birmingham area. Many of their parents and grandparents parents came from Birmingham, so they do have their connections, their roots, here. Some are members of St. Stephen's, St. Michael's or Holy Rosary. Some are students at Birmingham School.

There are three age groups. The youngest, they'll be dancing here today, start out at four and a half to five years old. They dance in this group until they are about ten. Then we have the intermediate group, from age ten to about age fourteen. And the senior group (which will not be dancing here because most of them work) starts at fourteen and goes into adulthood. Transition from one dance group into another is slow. When a dancer reaches the age of ten they dance for a while with the junior group and with the intermediate group. Then when they reach fourteen they continue to dance with the intermediate group while starting to practice with the senior group.

It's hard sometimes to raise funds for the dance group. We have small fundraisers. This last weekend we had a bake sale. We have raffles; we have candy sales. Just before Easter we have an Easter candy sale. We make our own chocolate bunnies and ducks. We are always, unfortunately, looking for

money, because of the costumes we need and the rate at which the group is growing. Our senior girls have just bought nice red boots, handmade by a Hungarian gentleman in Montreal, which cost us \$150.00 a pair. The boys got their boots a couple of years ago. We are hoping to go this summer to a week-long folk dance seminar that is usually held in New Jersey. They bring a folk dance teacher from Hungary and folk musicians who play music for us to dance to. This costs about three hundred dollars a dancer. We have about fifteen members in our senior group, so you can imagine, we have a fundraiser every month to try to get enough money together.

Each group practices once a week, every week. The senior group is on Tuesday evenings from seven to nine, sometimes, ten depending on how much practice we need. The junior group practices Thursday from six to seven thirty and the intermediate from seven thirty to nine. The intermediate group is learning a dance that was taught a long, long time ago and has become a tradition here in Birmingham, Ritka Buza. We used to have Hungarian folk dance groups in the fifties, forties, and before that, too.

There are a number of types of folk dance groups in the United States. One is the little church group where they put on some nice Gypsy music and make up some steps to it, and that is a Hungarian dance. Then there is the very professional type. One of the Detroit groups is like this. They bring teachers from Hungary, and they do only dances that come directly from Hungary. We try to do that, but I also mix in few dances from Birmingham. We're going to do a few steps of Ritka Buza just to introduce it today.

We don't teach just folk dancing. This year we started teaching Hungarian folk songs. The junior group has learned "Az a szep." They'll be doing a little of that today. The senior group is learning the Hungarian anthem. They have learned Hungarian prayers and a beautiful women's dance song in Hungarian. Keep in mind that only one or two of these dancers speak any Hungarian. Their background is Hungarian, but the language is one of the first things that people forget. That's hard to pass down. Yet they do a beautiful job of singing and learning the songs.

Another thing we are bringing in now, especially with the juniors and intermediates, is a little lecture after their practice. We are learning about the area of Kalocsa. They all took home some paprika the other week to give to their mom to put into a stew or soup. It's to help them remember different areas of Hungary. We are going to be learning a little bit about the different cities, too. One of the ways that we learn about the costumes is from paper dolls that we dress. Sometimes they surprise me. They come up and ask "How do you say this in Hungarian?" So we try to serve as a folk class on Tuesday and Thursday nights.

We'll begin with the junior dancers. There are about eight in this group, twelve in the intermediate group, and fifteen in the senior group. And, although the juniors and intermediate groups have only two boys in the group, half the senior group are fellows. It is really surprising how they stick with the group. Once we get the guys, they seem to stick with it longer than the girls. It's very hard to get the guys, though, because all their friends are out there playing football, and they get teased for dancing. But once you get them, they'll really work, not that the girls don't.

Editor's Note: Prior to each dance, the director introduced the performance.

- Dance 1. The csardas is one of the dances everyone knows in Hungary. This is just one variation of it, the circle csardas.
- Dance 2. Kapuvári verbunk -- the girls dance in a circle and the boys do fancy work with the sticks, we hope.
- Dance 3. The little ones are going to perform az-a-szep, and first they will be singing and dancing to it. We'll try it and then they will turn to the audience and sing it.
- Dance 4. I would like to present our intermediate group. They will do a maypole dance from the village of Kalocsa. We usually have a maypole but it is too tall for the ceiling. So, we will be doing the maypole dance without a maypole.
- Dance 5. Next is a Ugros, which is a jumping dance from Hungary. Then we will go into the pillow dance.
- Dance 6. First, we would like to do a short version of Ritka Buza because we are just learning this dance. It will be about the first three steps. Then we will have a little surprise.

Editor's Note: The dancers invited the audience to join them.

In conclusion, there is just one thing that I would like to mention. These two groups and the senior group has traveled all over the area. We go up to dance in Detroit, and we have won awards in Pittsburgh at the Hungarian Folk Dance Contest. Just a month ago, we borrowed St. Stephen's van and the senior group traveled to Cleveland where we were the opening act for a Hungarian opera group from Hungary. When Chef Louie Szatmary, the Hungarian chef from Chicago, was at the Masonic, we danced there during intermission for him. We really do go to a lot of places, and if any of you, and this is a little advertising, if you have organizations, we are glad to come, anytime. We are really glad to dance for you. Thank you.

A REACTION TO "INVOLVING YOUNG PEOPLE IN TRADITIONAL ART FORMS: THE MAGYAR DANCERS"

Dr. David Guip
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In reacting to the performance of the Magyar Dancers it is important to keep in mind that this experience is really part of a larger picture. It reinforces the concept that elements of style can be transmitted by elder members of a community to the youth of a society. In this case the performance of the dancers reflects the acquired knowledge of a group of specific dances which are part of the stylistic elements which make the Birmingham area unique to the environs of Toledo.

I took notes as the production was progressing. I would like to share those observations with you because they reinforce many of the points I would like to make today. While I was listening to Baba talk I jotted down the important components that she enumerated as significant elements of the set of dances. First, she mentioned that there is the phenomenon that members of the community take many aspects of the Birmingham artistic experience for granted. Second, the cultural aspects of the "Birmingham Experience" needs to be expanded and exemplified. Finally there appears to be a rejuvenation in cultural experience when one observes younger members of the community coming to the Birmingham Center to learn the traditions which were brought from the old country.

I thought it was very interesting to see that older dance members of the troupe were here as well as younger members. Indeed one of the recommendations I was going to make today, namely that very experience the sharing between elders and youth, is a critical component of cultural transmission. Dr. Ahern asked me to enumerate the strategies that could be employed to instill cultural heritage. It has already been shown to us today with the older members of the dance troupe sharing the elements of style and the components of the Magyar Dances in a peer-teaching experience with the younger members of the dance troupe. I was struck by the fact, quite simply, that the dance was a public form of cultural transmission rather than a private form of cultural transmission. I am sure that there are private forms of experiences in this center, and I will identify them in a moment, but this is obviously a very public kind of experience.

I was impressed by two kinds of phenomena present this afternoon. The first is the element of improvisation, which in any artistic domain is important, and its counterpoint, the concept of formalized instruction, which we see here in the teaching of traditional dance steps. The other phenomenon that struck me was the statement about folk classes. I am not sure what the curriculum related to these experiences might be, but I was thinking that since a benchmark is already there, it would be a wonderful way to instill pride in private creative experiences in addition to public experiences. No doubt the energy and vitality that we saw in this room is a clear indicator of a rejuvena-

tion of a sense of cultural tradition which has been practiced for a long time, and it is obvious it is being rejuvenated and revitalized and will continue in the immediate future.

Dealing primarily in the visual arts, I was struck by something that many of us discuss many times. That is, there are elements of style that bind a culture together. If one looks at the artifacts on display on the stage and considers the stylistic elements of the Magyar Dance Troupe, there are elements of style, components that fit together to make the artistic experiences in this community unique. For example, as I watched the dancers carefully, from an entirely different experience than the audience, I was struck by the body gestures, positions, the angular movements of the dancers, the rhythm, the pace and the costumes of the dancers, which all reinforce my observation of the many elements of style which we see in the visual works on display. I thought it was an interesting way to unite the common bonds between two generations. Finally, the very last comment that Baba made was that she is very interested in cultural diffusion in another way: she is willing to export her ideas and concepts to other agencies and other areas in the community to make more people in this area aware of your rich heritage.

I think one of the difficult things, not just for this particular group, but all cultural groups in general, whether it be The Jewish Community Center, the Islamic Cultural Center being built outside of Toledo, or Native American groups in this community, is the acculturation or impact of the values of other groups in society at large which alter dramatically the patterns of the people who live here. Are we looking, and these are rhetorical questions, at a group of people who are elder in years whose youth are moving away? Is there a common bond which can unite these people together? I think aesthetic education really is the basis by which many of these links can be established, and the Magyar Dance Troupe is an excellent exemplar of that. Generally speaking, a cultural or community agency such as this should look at the expression inherent in the visual arts and how they are used within a community context. For example, the dancers, the embroidery work, the egg decorating, all of these experiences need to be explored and I am sure that they are.

Another manifestation of the richness of the cultural heritage of this community was the way in which the members of the audience responded in a very positive manner to the dance experience and other visual art forms on display. I heard various comments about the revival of embroidery and decorating eggs. It was fascinating to sense the exuberance over the revival of this tradition apparently long since past but not extinct. There was real joy in the revival of this traditional folk art.

Finally, how do artists or other interested members in this community achieve the kinds of expression which preserve a cultural continuity. I gather from a few comments about the embroidery class that "folk artists" deal, to a certain extent, with a tutorial mode of instruction: one person sharing a knowledge, acquired through years of observation and assimilation with small groups.

On a larger scale, we are looking at art in this particular community in another way. First of all, the visual symbols, which we call iconography, a rather formal word, are really rather evident, if you look at the embroidery, if

you look at the Easter Eggs, if you look at the vest Dr. Ahern is wearing. There are symbols which are united throughout. I think if one went back and did a very accurate kind of description or looked to the historic record of the past, one would find that all these are very specific symbols. I commented earlier that the various dance techniques are elements of style. They allude to seasonal activity, and I suspect the iconography or the images of all of these are clearly related to some liturgical, seasonal or secular past. What are the ways that these experiences will be diffused? I think that's the beauty of the dance experience presented here today. The transmission of experience between elders and youth is demonstrated quite clearly. Embroidery classes and the folk art on display are examples of private experience.

From my point of view, among the most fascinating artifacts on display are the incredibly beautiful noodles, consumable works of art! The image of elder members of the community spending hours, a labor of love, sculpting these exquisite objects only to be placed into a soup or broth and eventually consumed, tells something about the creative process. That is, the creative process may be more than the product; and in a way, that's very thoroughly linked to the dance which in itself is sure to vanish, an ephemeral act, an ephemeral statement.

Youngsters in this particular community need to understand the origin of the styles which I have discussed. I think it is very important in the school, in the community, or the folk classes or the embroidery classes to deal not just with techniques or process. They should convey to youth the significance of the symbols they are dealing with and understand at the same time, while learning from these symbols, to think intelligently about deviating from the iconography while maintaining the spirit of the visual form. After all, it is important that they learn the traditional elements of style, but need to recognize that the private kind of creative experience is equally important. They should endeavor to combine the private experience with the more traditional elements of style in their own painting, drawings or other visual forms of expression.

A review of the traditional creative endeavors indigenous to the "old country" of the Hungarian/Ukrainian area indicate that there are at least three craft traditions that young adults in the Birmingham community should be aware of: paper cutouts called Wycinaki, decoration of eggs called Pysanki and straw designs called Byelorussian. One can see that the three or four principal forms of expression outside of dance (the public experience) are artistic traditions which might be called by some scholars minor art forms rather than major arts like large painting or heroic sculpture. You know far better than I that embroidery, applique, Wycinaki, Pysanki and Byelorussian relate back to the heritage of farming communities in your particular area of the world and have a longer tradition than the major arts. So these portable art styles, or private art forms I have alluded to are quite logical and important vehicles to transmit the culture of this particular community. Finally, I think that it is important that the youngsters learn about transmitting some criticism and discussion about these objects. Is this particular object they have made correct or right because it follows a prescriptive formula, or the elements of style that are there because they embody the iconography of the middle European artistic experience uniting the generations?

If I were contracted to develop a curriculum to transmit the cultural heritage of the Birmingham community to the youth of this area, the first thing I would do would be to facilitate a dialogue about the possibility that this is a vanishing culture although, by observation, it is quite apparent that the cultural components of this unique area are going through a rejuvenation. The folk artists for a great number of years have worked with great skill and dexterity to maintain your style and individuality, and I would think one of the important aspects of this culture is to reinforce those traditions by engaging in critical inquiry related to criticism and appreciation.

Having the children and young adults look at the embroidery and other traditional artifacts on display would act as a basis to form the foundation, not to emulate or copy, but rather to use those components as a basis for developing an individual style through private creative experiences. By experimenting with those stylistic components, young people will gain a greater appreciation through a tacit process which will enhance their understanding of the culture at large. After all we find in many other areas of the world that artists are looked up to, whether it be a great painter such as Peter Paul Rubens, or an African craftsman working in Nigeria. These artists in the past or present were emulated, and in a similar manner, the youth of this community can make the same artistic discoveries from the folk artists in this community.

The comparison of the object d'art that is produced by the young artist with traditional folk arts, or understanding the creative process of the noodle maker which has produced those wonderful edible artifacts that have long since vanished in the soup broth, becomes the mechanism for the transmission of style, one of the components of cultural heritage. We should observe elements of the "Birmingham style," the elements of the artist's heritage in the youngsters' work of art that is uniquely their own. In relationship to the larger picture, the youth of the community can get a better understanding of their artistic heritage by making comparisons with works of art from other areas of the world. A visit to the Toledo Museum of Art might be helpful for these young artists to see and understand the great merits in the decorative arts that are produced in this community. They would be able to see that many other cultures have not been able to produce decorative works of art of comparable quality.

A program designed to convey the preservation of a cultural heritage in a center such as this should have at its core five important components:

1. How the cultural center uses art expression.
2. How the people in a cultural center respond to works of art and creative experiences.
3. How the artists, whether it be folk artists or dancers, achieve expression.
4. How critics and historians respond to visual or artistic performances.
5. How to develop a personal response system, whether it be private or public.

The strategies, then, for developing a program to get young people involved in the Birmingham Cultural Center should utilize the skillful combination of the components I have just enumerated. It is obvious that this wonderful center is well on its way to developing such a program. The Magyar Dancers embody those ideals.

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TEACHING HUNGARIAN EMBROIDERY: A COMMUNITY'S RESPONSE TO PRESERVING ETHNIC HERITAGE

by
Judy Balogh

Teacher, Embroidery Classes
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Editor's Note: Unfortunately words cannot convey the visual stimulation created by Judy Balogh in the community room of the Birmingham Branch Library. On the stage, behind her podium, the speaker had arranged a group of twelve students who were demonstrating the activities in her class. Around the room were displayed examples of the art form, and the lecture ended with a fashion show of Hungarian embroidered clothing!

Hungarian folk art embroidery is recognized and popular throughout the world. In Hungary, embroidery is an individual art. Colors used by one village are not used by another, and each village has a different way of drawing the same flower. Each district or county has its beautiful and distinctive design traditions. Folk art reflects the taste and culture of people living in small villages and isolated farms.

It has always been a working class phenomenon kept alive by artists and small tradesmen pursuing their livelihood in peasant communities. The methods and motifs are handed down from generation to generation, culture to culture, century to century in actual samples and in written records. Nowhere are the traditions of folk art better preserved than in Hungary. One can recognize the county or area by the design one is wearing on his or her clothing or costume. The designs, or patterns, have historical backgrounds and are used not only in needlework but in wood carving, furniture, wall decorations, personal plates, dishes, furniture and pottery. Hungarian folk art features stylized plants and flowers, tulips, poppies, corn flowers, carnations, forget-me-nots, marigolds, lillies, lillies of the valley, wheat (Hungary is known as the bread basket of Europe) and, of course, the red paprika. I am sure everyone is familiar with Hungary's sweet and hot paprika.

During my recent trip to Hungary, I went to Kalocsa because of my interest in developing more history about Kalocsa paprika and Kalocsa embroidery. Going south from Budapest, you will see acres and acres of the red paprika fields ready for harvest in early August. Paprikas originally grew downward with the leaves covering them from the sun, thus delaying the ripening for several weeks. An early frost, which often occurs, would ruin the harvest.

In 1970 Dr. Ferenc Zakonyi was awarded the Nobel Prize for his research to develop a new kind of paprikas, one growing upward above the leaves. As a result of his work, the paprikas are harvested six weeks earlier and are ready for processing. The grinding of the peppers, including seeds, consists of ten processings. In ancient years the paprika was used for healing

purposes as medication and is known throughout the world by medical scientists for its high contents of vitamin C.

Among the many districts in Hungary with beautiful and distinctive design traditions are Karadi, Turia, Baranyi and Matyo. The most popular and the most recognized are the Matyo and Kolosca. The Matyo embroidery design has been popular since the 1880's. One can recognize the bright happy colors. The colors used in the Matyo work are meant to symbolize elements of Hungary or Hungarian life. Red represents joy, black, the earth or soil, and blue, death or grief. The Matyo embroidery is worked in satin stitch with silk floss on felt, mostly on black and white cotton linen.

The Kalocsa is everyone's favorite. One can recognize and distinguish the Kalocsa from many other patterns and designs by the bright colors of all the naturalistic flower designs. The Kolocsa has a total of 42 flowers which includes the paprika and the wheat. Kolocsa embroidery is also worked in satin stitch with selections of colors to match each flower. Each flower is separated by its own color. Two flowers are never worked next to one another in the same color. This is done so each flower will stand out in its own beauty. For example, a red tulip is never worked next to a red rose or poppy, a pink daisy never next to a pink carnation.

The most attractive and the most beautiful is the Riselio Kalacca embroidery "cut work." It is very expensive but very beautiful. This art work is done in table cloths, doilies, dresser scarfs, blouses, skirts, aprons and wedding gowns or formals. Can you imagine a full-length wedding gown with that beautiful colorful Kalacca cut work? It is absolutely gorgeous. I've seen many of them in Hungary; in fact, one of the salesmen wanted me to buy one. I will never be a bride again, but I said, "How much is it?" and he said "eight hundred dollars." And that was in 1976, so I can imagine now what a full length dress would cost today. It is done in beautiful colors but it is also beautiful in solid colors, white and ecru.

Hungarian embroidery was first introduced into the Birmingham neighborhood in 1977 by Mrs. Irene Eber. Irene, who had been working in art for 40 years, came from her home in Budapest to share her knowledge and skills in Hungarian embroidery with the people of Toledo. Father Hernady of St. Stephens parish is responsible for bringing Irene to Birmingham to share her art in classes at St. Stephen's and Calvin United Church. Irinka returned to Birmingham in 1979 and had an enrollment of 75 students. Thus her classes continued to arouse interest throughout Toledo and the surrounding areas. Father had asked Irinka to make vestments for Mass. He has three he wears for the 10:00 a.m. Hungarian Sunday Mass. By attending this Mass, one can imagine attending Mass in Kalocsa and admire the beautiful embroidery art work. Irene donated to St. Stephens these vestments in appreciation to Father Hernady for inviting her from Hungary to the United States to help organize our embroidery interests.

After Irene Eber returned to Hungary in 1979, I was asked to continue the classes at Calvin by Rev. Hernady and also by Reverend Imre Bertalan. My first class was started in September, 1978 with only 28 members. Each week the classes were increasing by numbers of people with great interest and eager to learn. In 1979 we started with 42, and by 1980 we had 54 students,

and every year we have averaged 50 to 60 people in my class. We have one class at Calvin United Church of Christ at Bogar and Bakewell Streets. The class begins in September the first Monday after Labor Day and ends the first week in May. We meet from seven to nine in the evening. The second class meets at East Broadway and Varland in the East Toledo Family Center from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon. During my seven years of instruction, I have instructed 378 members!

With all the many different patterns in embroidery, I am most familiar with two, the Matyo and Kolocsa. These are the two I teach in my two classes. We also have a great interest in smocking to add to the embroidered ladies' blouses.

The material we use is perforated patterns. I purchase these in Hungary. In 1970 we used patterns Irinka left for our use. It was impossible to purchase any such patterns in our visits to Hungary in the '70's. Each village or city has someone transferring their patterns on their request, but they did not want to sell their patterns for fear we would be taking over their livelihood. So we would buy ready transferred material for patterns and bring them home to copy. Since 1981 we have had the good fortune to contact several individual artists, through relatives, who are now selling their patterns to us to bring back for our classes, knowing we would not be interfering with their trade in Hungary. Patterns are drawn free hand by experts on parchment-like paper. They use electric or battery operated needles similar to a ball point pen and go along the outlines with machines to make the perforated holes. The pattern is then placed on the material desired and brushed through the perforated design outlines with a felt brush with blue or white paste. We use the blue paste for white and other light materials and the white paste for black and other dark materials. We apply it with the felt brush with kerosene or mineral spirits. The paste contains paraffin wax melted with paraffin oils, and added to it is colored powder paint, either blue or white. When the wax is set it forms into a bar or cake. To transfer the pattern, kerosene or mineral spirits is applied to the bar. It makes a paste which is rubbed through the perforated pattern. It takes time. The patterns are cleaned and each can be used 100 times or more. When the iron-on method is used, however, the pattern is no longer transferrable and is discarded.

The patterns are popular on Christmas tree ornaments, pin cushions, small and large doilies, dresser scarfs, aprons, blouses, T-shirts, skirts, men's shirts, felt vests, pictures, house blessings, bell pulls, table cloths, pillows, little girls' dresses, infant dresses and curtains for kitchens.

The floss or thread used for the embroidery is DMC pearl cotton #8 and we use quilting needles because the quilting needles have rounded eyes at the top. Your embroidery needle has a point eye. The DMC pearl cotton is rounded and it flows freely back and forth through the needle. The satin stitch is used to fill in all patterns with the simple running stitch for outlining. The scalloped edges are done with button hole stitch in white or color for that finishing touch. When it comes to embroidery, patience is as necessary as needle and thread and anyone can be a master of the art of Hungarian embroidery with a little time and lots of patience.

It gives me great satisfaction to have the opportunity to share our culture and our heritage, and I hope to pass it on to you, your children and grandchildren for many years. My greatest reward is to see all the beautiful work each member has accomplished. Our Birmingham Ethnic Festival is more colorful each year with the ladies showing off all their beautiful embroidery. We hope to continue our cultural heritage, and you can be a part of it. We invite you to come and join us for friendship, fellowship and love.

A REACTION TO "A COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION'S RESPONSE TO PRESERVING ETHNIC HERITAGE"

by

Dr. Ronald Randall
Director of the Urban Affairs Center
and Professor of Political Science
The University of Toledo

It is a pleasure to be here, to be invited to participate in this program-- a program that I had a small part in helping to create as Director of the Urban Affairs Center. In fact, little did I realize when a number of us from the University and from this community met in this very room nearly three years ago to talk about creating a cultural center of some sort that it would develop into this project of which we are so proud.

We have just heard a most interesting and informative presentation by Judy Balogh. Her activities are directed toward preserving an aspect of an ethnic heritage. In this room, Mrs. Balogh has assembled examples of Hungarian embroidery that, I would bet, rival any collection in this country. We are indebted to her for both the presentation and the exhibit.

I would like to respond to Mrs. Balogh's presentation in a general way by offering some thoughts on the importance of preserving ethnic heritage generally. I believe that major efforts to preserve ethnic heritage can contribute to the rejuvenation of aging, industrial, midwestern cities like Toledo.

In the Industrial Age, America needed cities like Toledo to perform a mission essential to the nation's economic development. Great waves of immigrants from Europe and migrants from rural and southern America poured into cities of the midwest in the late 19th and early 20th centuries in search of jobs. Arriving poor, often destitute, their children frequently moved into the middle class because industrial cities of Ohio and the rest of the Midwest and Northeast responded with an abundance of factory jobs that produced steel, machinery, automobiles, and other durable goods for the rest of the country and world. Toledo and other industrial cities performed their historical mission of transforming poverty into affluence with great efficiency, until recently.

For the past two or three decades, it is commonly observed that our industrial cities of Ohio are becoming stagnant. Aside from government, some commerce, and management activity in corporate offices, people and business are deserting our central cities. Social problems fester in their centers, making them less attractive. Those who can, get out, leaving worsening problems for those who remain. We now clearly see that many industrial cities of this state are no longer providing upward mobility and acculturation into the mainstream of America, nor are they serving as the great centers of manufacturing and retail sales they once were.

For the past two or three years, we have also been saying that our state has become stagnant, with a loss of manufacturing jobs, high unemployment, and state government in fiscal disarray. It is time to assert a connec-

tion between the two or three decades of urban stagnation and the two or three years of state stagnation. As policy makers in the state search for strategies to create jobs by encouraging firms to expand or locate in Ohio, they should try to understand the importance of central city health to the well-being of the entire state, particularly as they enter the post-industrial era. For years, this state could proceed on the assumption that central city decline had little bearing on the health of the rest of the state. As the wealth of the state moved to the suburbs, it appeared that decline in one place could be more than offset by gains in another, leaving the state, on balance, better off. That illusion is no longer possible to sustain.

That cities of Ohio have lost their economic touch can be seen in numerous ways. From 1970 to 1980, six of the seven largest cities in the state actually lost population, as did four of the seven largest SMSAs (Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas). Only one of the 30 largest cities in the country lost population at a faster rate than Cleveland. In one Cleveland area, Hough, 50 percent of the people who lived there in 1970 are gone. Columbus was the only large city in the state to gain population in the 1970s. Overall, the central cities of Ohio dropped from 3,380,238 population in 1970 to 3,067,461 in 1980, a decline of 9.2 percent. As the central cities of Ohio were losing their population in the 1970s, the suburban fringes were gaining--from 3,269,325 to 3,470,745 for an increase of 6.2 percent. Every suburban fringe in Ohio, including Cleveland's, registered population increases. Even in the face of energy shortages and increasing gasoline costs, Ohioans continued their flight to the suburbs and, to a lesser extent, the sunbelt.

Looking back, we will probably conclude that the Ohio industrial city reached its zenith in the 1950s. Although cities have always attracted problems, the grave social and economic problems that now afflict them are clear indicators that they can no longer perform their historical mission of upward mobility and acculturation. They no longer transform societal problems into resources for industry. Instead, the problems fester. And now the conditions of the state of Ohio as a whole worsen.

Until recently, we thought that even as the cities were in decline, the suburbs and the rest of the state were immune from the economic and social malaise. Not so. Imperceptibly, but inexorably, the entire state has been gradually losing ground en route to a post-industrial era. The telling indicator is the slide in Ohio's per capita income, relative to the other states of the nation. Ohio has slipped from a position of ninth wealthiest in the early 1950s to around 15 in the 1960s, to 29th in 1982. From 114 percent of U.S. per capita income in 1951, Ohio dropped to 96 percent of U.S. per capita income in 1982.

From 1970 to 1980, only four states in the country had a lower population growth rate than Ohio. Because of its concentration on production of durables, Ohio has always been susceptible to significant unemployment during serious national recessions, but until the last few years it almost always had a lower unemployment rate than the U.S. average. Recently, however, Ohio has had one of the highest unemployment rates in the nation.

In the fall of 1981, the Urban Affairs Center sponsored a major conference at The University of Toledo on "Midwest Cities: Culture and Crisis."

Experts on midwest cities in government, business, community organizations and universities from all over the midwest came to Toledo to participate.

At the conference there was general agreement that our midwest cities were in a serious state of decline. The industrial base was in a period of fundamental change; population loss to the suburbs and to the sunbelt was increasing. Communities, formerly well-knit and cohesive, seemed to be coming apart. To some critics at the conference there were no solutions. They viewed the long-run trends facing this city and other midwest cities as too powerful to counteract. Some of them did expect a sort of equilibrium to be reached among cities in various sections of the country but not until more people and more capital left Toledo and other midwest cities for points south. These critics, for the most part, viewed the midwest cities as overgrown factory towns that offered little more than factory jobs to those who would live in them.

Many of the participants at the conference back in 1981 took quite a different point of view. They all recognized the seriousness of the decay, the decline and the change that engulfed most midwest cities including Toledo. But within the midwest cities, these participants described a richness of urban culture, the important ethnic heritage, and some of the aesthetic qualities that we find in midwest cities like Toledo.

A person well-known to all of you--a member of this community, Peter Ujvagi--participated in the conference. He was one of those who took the more positive point of view. In his presentation, Councilman Ujvagi increased our awareness of the importance of community in midwest cities by using his favorite community--this one --as an example. He described a physical community, a social community, an economic community, and then the way in which people all over town identified with what he called an extended community. Although Birmingham is a multi-ethnic cultural community, he said, it has a very strong "ethnic, cultural identity that helps to hold our community together."

I think that is crucial--an "identity that helps to hold our community together." For one of the serious problems of modern life and one of the factors leading to the deterioration of midwest cities is the loss of a sense of community. The true rejuvenation of our cities will require a redevelopment of this sense of community.

We are, of course, seeing some major changes here in Toledo and in many midwestern cities. We see construction of new buildings, many of them downtown, and the renovation of older ones, which are changing the face of our cities, particularly of our downtowns. But as central business districts take on a new look, we must understand that community revitalization involves more than buildings.

If there is a causal relationship between the decline of Ohio's cities and the subsequent decline in the economic redevelopment of the state, then a central element in the redevelopment of the state should be the revitalization of the state's central cities. Not every futurist will agree. Alvin Toffler places little emphasis on the central city. In his vision of the future many of us will remain home in our "electronic cottages" working at our computer terminal.

"With millions of us spending our time at home, instead of going out to an office or factory," Toffler leaves a haunting image of the central city:

Our biggest factories and office towers may, within our lifetimes, stand half empty, reduced to use as ghostly warehouses or converted into living space. ...this is precisely what the new mode of production makes possible: a return to cottage industry on a new, higher, electronic basis, and with it a new emphasis on the home as the center of society. (Alvin Toffler, p. 210.)

Other futurists argue that Toffler vastly overstates the electronic cottage idea. (See John Naisbitt, pp. 45-46). Face-to-face contact will always be desired and necessary. In the post-industrial society, knowledge-intensive activities become more important. We talk about an increase in services, but these are not consumer services; they are services sold or developed for other firms: research and development, accounting, engineering, banking, advertising, public relations, printing and communications. Downtown cities serve service-producing firms well. The cities which succeed in the next two or three decades will be those which retain and attract headquarters, regional offices and the plethora of service firms all located in close proximity in a central business district. The function of these successful cities will be to provide the rich positive environment corporations need to develop and exploit new technology.

The knowledge-based corporation requires an attractive environment for its well-paid, upper-middle class workers. The old industrial-city mentality is not enough. All that the industrial city had to do was provide jobs--low-skilled jobs at that. Successful cities in a post-industrial society must provide a high level of amenities for middle and upper-middle classes. Midwest cities, including Toledo, which emerge from this present era of transition having made the change from an industrial to a post-industrial city will be exciting, vibrant, amenity-rich places which have preserved and enhanced their urban culture, their ethnic heritage, their aesthetic qualities, and their sense of community. Less successful cities will be places of strife, racial antagonism, high unemployment. They probably will pursue antiquarian efforts to attract a few, dirty, factory or production jobs for their unemployed whose wage demands are not competitive in a world with cheap labor in developing nations. Less successful cities will be depopulated, decentralized, and deteriorated. They will be cities of declining wealth and few amenities. Adjoining their declining cities will be islands or sanctuaries in suburban districts for the remaining wealth so that those with the resources can avoid responsibility for the metropolitan problems.

Birmingham, it seems to me, has helped to define what Toledo was and what Toledo is. For a truly significant Toledo of the future, a Toledo which retains its unique identity, we must build on our strengths. To a significant degree, that means preserving and enhancing the best of our ethnic heritage. That is why I think it is so important that people like Judy Balogh be encouraged to use forums like this and to engage in the teaching that she is doing to remind some of us and to educate others of us about the importance of this heritage. As Judy Balogh said, she's just trying to help pass this tradition on to others, to your children and your children's children. That is important.

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ABAUJ BETHLEHEME -- FROM FATHER TO SON: AN ETHNIC CHRISTMAS PLAY

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The editor assumed the responsibility of excerpting sentences and sections of Professor Pentzell's article. The reader is strongly urged to read the article in its entirety.

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A Hungarian Christmas Mummers' Play in Toledo, Ohio in
Educational Theatre Journal,
v. 29, No. 2 (May, 1977).

by

Raymond J. Pentzell

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The costumes of the shepherds and angels are almost identical: flowing white blouses with loose, uncuffed sleeves (resembling an acolyte's surplice) and full, ankle-length white skirts, sometimes trimmed at bottom with lace or fringe. An older tradition, still maintained by some players, substitutes white gatyak --the broad, skirt-like culotte once worn by Magyar plainsmen-- for the skirts. Players have broad red shoulder-sashes, and red bows at their necks...

All wear tall, brimless hats of shiny cardboard, about sixteen inches high, painted or appliqued with paper and foil and hung with ribbons fastened at the top. The hats are in the shape of truncated cones, colored in various combinations of white, red, green, blue, and gold, with large crosses, stars, and rosettes emblazoned on the front... Shepherds carry straight poles, about five

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feet long and an inch and a half in diameter, with "jinglers" (as on a tambourine) nailed to the top...

Two angels carry between them the Bethlehem, a model church with a wide portal, inside which are the figures of the creche. Money at performances is sometimes kept in the Bethlehem...

Oreg means "old one" or "old man". The oregek of the Toledo Bethlehem plays are recognizably demonic, particular variants of the wild-man or fur-demon mummers known throughout Europe...

The players I spoke to explained the apparent paradox in a variety of ways:

"He is supposed to be a pagan who worships the devil and acts like one";

"He is really the devil, the old one, come to tempt the other shepherds";

"The word oreg --old man--sounds like-- ordog --devil"; "He's just a rotten old funny bastard."...

An oreg, in Toledo, will always brandish a real (but blunted) axe, painted red and white, and have a pouch or satchel slung over his shoulder; one or more cowbells will be tied to his belt or his legs...

The players form a procession at the beginning of the Midnight Mass of Christmas. Shepherds and angels proceed up the center aisle in full costume, hats on, the angels carrying the Bethlehem. The oregek, however, do not wear their fur masks and generally keep some steps to the rear. All sing folk carols, first at the back of the church and then during their slow march: "Mondjatók Mag Jo Pasztorok, Miket Lattakok?" ("Tell us, good shepherds, what have you seen?"); "Szent, Szent, Szent Vagy, Nagy Ur Isten" ("Holy, holy, holy, are you, great Lord God"); "Istengyermek, kit irgalmad kozenk lehozott" ("God's Child, who through suffering has been brought to us"); "O gyonyoru sep, titokzatos ej" ("If I step outside the door")... In late morning or early afternoon of Christmas Eve and Christmas Day the players take to the streets. They know roughly which houses they will preform in, on the basis of past welcomes, awareness that family parties will be going on, or simply by mutual agreement. Some householders, but not all, have given them explicit invitations, and they in turn may have given the resident an idea when to expect them. Scheduling is expected for performances at the corner taverns, sites of great applause and generous donations on Christmas Eve.

On the street the shepherds and angels walk in a group, with some dignity, though not solemnity. Occasionally they sing the carols used in the church procession. As the shepherds mark their steps with their poles, the jingling becomes rhythmic. The oregek, meanwhile, race up and down the blocks yelling and waving their axes, their cowbells clanking, in uproarious attempts to frighten children and kiss girls. It used to be customary for them to pilfer groceries from the shops; all food was dutifully donated to the convent, though wine always mysteriously vanished by day's end... At the door of a house or bar one of the shepherds or angels announces their presence.

Shouted welcomes greet them. The angels enter and place the Bethlehem on a table or chair. The shepherds follow, beating the jingling poles rhythmically on a the floor. The oregek remain on the porch peering in the windows and doorway while cracking jokes, or else (in bad weather) slink or leap into the room and roam around the edges of the gathering, growling, kissing girls, and jocularly insulting audience members. The shepherds and angels arrange themselves in a rough semicircle in the center of the space and, to the tapping of the poles, together sing a song (which the oregek may join in singing if they feel like it). The play proper has begun.

RECOLLECTIONS ABOUT "ABAUJ BETHLEHEME -- FROM FATHER TO SON AN ETHNIC CHRISTMAS FOLK PLAY"

by
Jerry Vasko, Actor

It is a privilege and a pleasure to be here because this is special. It is also special to my friends in the back who were also in the play. The five players in the back that were together the longest were supposed to be here but Bobby Gall had to work overtime, and he said he may not be able to make it. But, my friends Lou Kristof and Bob Kertesz are here. I have performed the play 28 years and I know Bob did it before I did. Louie due to early retirement stopped.

It is kind of special to me, as I mentioned, because the title of the play is "From Father To Son," and my great-grandfather, my grandfather, my father, myself and my oldest son have been in the play. At Midnight Mass several years ago we had the privilege of having Bob Kertesz and his oldest son, Bob Gall and his oldest son, and my oldest son and me together for a Midnight Mass performance. Father Hernady made mention of this in his sermon, and it was really a thrill. Bob Gall, incidentally, has had both of his sons perform. Bob Kertesz has another son that he hopes to get into it, and I have three more sons!

The "fat guy" in the film¹ mentioned that "It was something that you wanted to do. It is something that you look forward to doing every year." It is called the Abauj Bethlehem. Abauj happens to be the state in Hungary where my father was born and it was also the state where the play originated.

We used to start practicing the day after Thanksgiving, when we were young and really looked forward to doing this. We practiced a lot for the Midnight Mass singing. It was very important to us. Although the play was serious, the play was more of a fun thing to do and it was done with on the spot humor by my friend, the "oreg" Bobby Kertesz. I could count on him. If we went to three different houses he would have three different things to confuse me with.

Although we are all second generations, Bobby Kertesz by far spoke the best Hungarian, and when he would come up with some of his little dandies, I would really have to stop and think and try to buffalo my way through what he said.

The play really became serious for us when Father Hernady asked us to perform it for the first time in church at Midnight Mass. This was quite a few years ago when the custom had stopped in the neighborhood. The custom of going from house to house had stopped (which was a big thing for us also); the play was entirely in church. Finally there was nobody to do it. We all had

¹ (Editor's note. Mr. Vasko is referring to himself and he has lost much weight since the film.)

our own families, and even those of us who had performed it the longest wanted to devote some time to our families for a change, and one Midnight Mass there was not a play. There were no "oregs." There were just Hungarian Christmas Carols. So, we came out of retirement and kept at it for awhile. You see, the emphasis was always put on our singing and marching. It was always very important to us to sound better than the Elso² troupe. We were always the Masodik,³ we were always the younger ones, and we were always second. The older ones always did their singing first, and our Christmas Carols were different than theirs and naturally ours were better -- at least we felt that and we always did say we were better. That used to be our trademark. In our time, a special hymn, "O Gyonyoru Szep", was taught to us by a nun, Sister Veronica. She was an operatic singer, and we harmonized and sang it in the round. You heard it at the end of the first film when we saw another important thing: Mrs. Kertesz looking out her front door. It was not an original hymn that made people turn around and look to see who was singing it at Midnight Mass.

We had been the ones that had always been called upon by one of the "world's greatest politicians," Father Hernady, who would say, "Jerry, Bobby, Louis, Bobby, can you come do it for me? If you don't do it at Midnight Mass we are not going to have it." We got the same approach from Father year after year after year. God bless him! He's great and we consider it a privilege to do it for him.

I taped the first Midnight Mass that we performed together in church. The following year Father Hernady borrowed my tape. The next thing I know there is advertising in the parish bulletin for players for a film to be made about the traditional play. This hurt us very badly because we had always been the good, old stalwarts. I had some questions: "What the heck is he doing advertising for players for the film? Why can't we do it? and Father where is my tape?" I immediately became upset with him. He told me: "Oh, your tape is in the Smithsonian Institute, Jerry, and as a result we got a government grant through Peter Ujvagi and the Preservation of Ethnic Neighborhoods Group. We got a \$50,000 grant to make a film." We were hot; we were all very hot under the collar. We felt that they should just come and ask us, don't ask anyone else! That was rather selfish because of the fact that there were a lot of people before us; but we were young guys with hot tempers, and we couldn't see that at that time. Fortunately, the people who came forward were us, and we were in the film, and thank God for that.

The filming of what you actually saw began the day after Thanksgiving of one year, and the final takes were on February 10 of the following year. That time was needed to make the two part-film that you saw. I never thought there was so much to making something that was really dear to us.

One Midnight Mass, the year we came out of retirement, a little old Hungarian lady (I don't remember her name but Bobby Gall would), this little old Hungarian lady with a cane said to us, "Now I can die in peace, I've seen it

2 Elso -- Translated means "first one."

3 Masodik -- Translated means "other one."

one more time." This made us feel that the time we spent practicing and the time we spent away from our families made it all worthwhile. When we see the pride and smiles on our families' and friends' faces, it makes all the work worthwhile. The work our mothers put into ironing our costumes; the work our friends put into making the props: the hats and the sticks. The people who did a lot of work were Louie Kristof, Bobby Gall, Bobby Kertesz and myself. I didn't do too much, I just did a little painting, but Bobby made the sticks and his own costume. Louis and his brother made the hats. There was team work. The building and the care of the church, as you saw on the film, was done by Mr. Toth. He kept that church up year after year after year, and it is still in use.

Christmas evening meal cooked by Mrs. Kertesz and eaten together by us before we went out to perform the first time each year was a very special thing to us, too. It is something we will never forget. All of these are unforgettable memories, so you can see the pride we have about the play. Another source of pride I have was this week when my mother sprang a little surprise on me. (Editor's Note: Mr. Vasko shows a little boy's costume.) This is a little boy's costume that she found tucked away because I had asked her to find my original costume for this lecture. The costume you saw in the movie was not my original because I couldn't get into it at that particular time, but this (Editor's Note: Shows another costume.) particular costume was the one I wore when I started. This costume belonged to my grandfather, my father and myself. My father would have been 81 years old and his father wore this so you don't have to be a mathematical genius to figure out how old this is. And, another little treat that my mother found for me, (Shows a third costume) this belonged to my great-grandfather, his initials are on here, S.J.V., and this would have to be in the neighborhood for over a hundred years. It is hand-made and is made of Hungarian linen. Those are Hungarian costumes. (Editor's Note: Shows another costume.) God bless our mothers for how they used to prepare our costumes and iron the ruffles into something this big because those were our skirts, and she used to hand iron them. My mother is going to shoot me for showing you this because she wanted to iron this, but I wouldn't let her do it. Thank you very much for the privilege of letting me talk to you and express how we feel about this. Now, my friend Bobby Kertesz had asked to say a couple of things too.

Robert Kertesz. Jerry said to come down here and be his backup, and I said I would say a few words and here I am. I don't know if anyone remembers how it used to be. It was really "a big deal." I've been in it for a long time. My brother and I were both doing it at Christmas time when he was on leave from the Navy. When I was old enough and in the Navy, I came home Christmas time and did it too. It was really a big thing. What you saw in the film was pretty well "tamed down" from what we used to do in the houses. What I like was kissing all the girls and taking what you wanted and that was fun for us too! We never had to buy cigarettes for about two weeks after Christmas.

We were given a lot of food that we gave to the nuns. We would go there whenever we were looking our best.

To give you some idea of what we got, we used to collect \$1,000 to sometimes \$1,400 and give it to the church.

I brought my little boy here today mostly because I was on that film, and part of it was done at my mother's house. We used to have dinners there. We started out at Mrs. Gall's house, and then we had dinners at my mom's house for seven, eight years. She fed us for two days, seven guys and after Midnight Mass we had dinner there. It was just a good time and I would like to see it go on from father to son and from the next father to son.

A REACTION TO ABAUJ BETHLEHEME-- FROM FATHER TO SON AN ETHNIC CHRISTMAS FOLK PLAY

by

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I am not Hungarian. I say that right away because I have a friend, a very good friend whom I knew in graduate school, twice as many years ago as that movie is old, who is a Hungarian from Budapest. He came here in 1956 during the troubles. As long as I can remember he always said: "Not everyone is Hungarian, everyone just tries to be."

In 1973 the Hungarian Bethlehem play here in Birmingham was at a very low ebb. I was teaching at The University of Toledo, and I would start my fall course in the History of the Theatre by talking about the survival of folk drama--a very quick survey of folk plays, largely in Europe. I was then unaware that there were any in America of that type except among the Mexicans in New Mexico. A student, an eighteen or nineteen year old student sitting in the front row, was not taking notes while I showed slides of the Austrian "Perchten", characters very much like the "oreg" here. I was showing slides of hobby horses from England, showing slides of Romanian mummers from just over the mountains from Hungary. He was not taking a note. When the lecture was over, I said, "Ron, this is going to be on the test. Why didn't you take any notes? Is your hand broken?" He responded:

"No, I know all that."

"How do you know all that?"

"Well, a friend of mine, who grew up in Birmingham, over on the East Side -- well, they have that every year."

"They have what every year?"

"That, that. What you were showing slides of: boogie men, people with bells, going up and down the street, performing plays in houses."

"No, they don't, Ron."

"Sure they do. You go over and see."

So I did. Ron said to go over on Christmas Eve, go to Monoky's Bar. I said to myself: "Fine, even if nothing turns up I will be happy! And I took a group of students over with me, and really there was next to nothing: just a young troupe of high school kids, for the most part from St. Michael's Church, doing the play or rather their version of it. At that time they performed in either English or Hungarian. They learned their roles by rote. I talked to the priest who at the time was pastor of St. Michael's, and I began to find out a

little bit about the play. Then I began investigating and of course found out about the two troupes at St. Stephen's. They just didn't happen to be around that year, but I talked to this person, talked to that person: reminiscences, explanations. "Why don't you go visit the nuns? They have up in in their attic a complete set of the old newspapers." I interviewed people randomly off and on for about a year, and the people I talked with were extremely friendly but rather uninformative. I think there was the suspicion at that time about the young man from the University of Toledo: "What does he want?" "It's none of his business." There was still, I think, a slight fear that what I had in mind was a little glitzy newspaper article that would take the tone, "Oh, how cute these old fashioned Hungarians are." This was not my intention at all. I simply wanted to find out as much as I could about the play, because it was all new to me, and because I'd been enthusiastically reading about folk drama for years. But, eventually, just from pestering people I began to meet informants who would sit down, have a beer and talk to me at some length. It got to the point where I had a pile of information, a couple of copies of very old photographs, and a script that Father Hernady rooted out for me. Now this script was the script of the Masodik troupe, your troupe. Unfortunately, it was hopelessly garbled by a young crowd who was doing it around 1969-70. (laughter) (Editor's Note: He acknowledges Mr. Vasko and the other members of the troupe.) It was between your younger days and your comeback. And, of course, I don't know any Hungarian, and Father Hernady assured me this was not very good Hungarian. But he said, "Take it, xerox it, do anything you want with it." Well, I sent it to my friend Dr. Sarlos, with a quote from whom I began this little talk. He teaches theatre at the University of California, Davis. He called me back on the phone and said, "How much do I get for this?" I said, "Roby, a favor, narrate a rough translation into a tape recorder."

"A rough translation? I have to go over this with a magnifying glass, and I have to go over my own Hungarian dictionary to find out what they are trying to say."

It was extremely garbled not only in the presentation but also in the transcription. Whoever had written it down had no idea how to spell anything or what was being said. The transcriber put it down as he heard it. But Roby Sarlos plugged away at it and came up with a reasonably decent reconstruction of what it was supposed to be. He did the same with the mimeographed scripts from St. Michael's. And as I "went on the road with it" I wrote a rough version of an article that was later published, and I presented it at a professional convention of the American Society for Theatre Research, which meets every year. I even had some slides made from photographs, and yet there was a lot that I didn't know. There were big holes in my information. Still, it raised a flap at this convention of theatrical scholars and theatre historians. People were coming up to me not only with congratulations but also with new leads. An Israeli named Zeev Raviv told me, "In my boyhood all the Christians did this in Hungary." He was from Hungary. "We do something like it in Israel for Purim. We dechristianized it somehow. It looks very similar. The "oreg" is Hamon, you know, and the shepherd is a male version of Esther, but the Israelis have the same costumes and some of the same action, the axes and everything else. But it is all from different scriptures; it is from Israel." I felt I was really on to something here. This was amazing. So I took a little vacation. I went to the Yale Library because I happened to be in the New York area. I did a lot of background research. There is quite an amount of pub-

lished but rather outdated material by now. Much of it is written in German and in French as well as in English. In addition, I simply piled up a load of books in Hungarian, which I cannot read. (I still have not succeeded in teaching myself more than the song titles.) I brought everything back, had people help me translate the Hungarian, and began patching together the article.

At that point a friend of mine, who had been a contact introducing me to people, called me up and said, "You've got to meet Peter Ujvagi; Peter Ujvagi has got money to make a film of this. He would like to see your work." I visited with Peter; I found out that he had a lot more information than I did. I got the better of that bargain. I showed him the pictures I had and some of the background research and so forth, and this was the point at which I got the song lyrics and the decent script that you men use, and I was invited to come in and participate (mainly kibitz) and watch, and party with the Masodik troupe. I didn't do too much that was useful while the film was being made. But as a result I ended up with an article for publication in the Educational Theatre Journal that was much, much better than it would have been had not the movies been made. At the same time I think I was of some help to Peter in working from his literal translation of the script, turning the lines into better colloquial English, including the English translations of the songs.

It's funny, just last year I directed, up at Hillsdale College, an English Christmas play, "The Wakefield Second Shepherds' Play." It's not very much like the Hungarian plays, but we needed an exit hymn, a carol. I couldn't use any English carols; I wanted something more remote than that, something that everybody in the audience hasn't heard. I looked back in my files. And we sang to the same tune, the English translation (which, I saw to it, rhymed) of "Ha Kimegyek Ajtom Ele." A different costume, a different play, yet the same songs. I'm still pillaging that material. The year before we did an English mummers play, at Hillsdale, and for the troupe's money-collecting song it was "Aldja Meg az Istent," your money-collecting song, translated into English.

You remember that this film was shot around Christmas of '76 even though it has a '78 copyright. In the fall of 1977 when my article came out, I started being deluged with mail from people who remembered the Bethlehemisek: people from Warren, Pennsylvania; parts of New Jersey; Hungarian communities throughout the whole of what they are now calling the "rust belt," all the way over to Philadelphia and beyond, but nowhere did I turn up any correspondence to tell me that this was still being done in other American communities. I turned up a few very interesting things. For example, in Cleveland there was (probably still is) a nice Hungarian Shrovetide play being done, "The Burial of the Bull Fiddle" and Latvians in southwestern Michigan do a St. John's Day play. There is so much of this type of thing still around, still ekeing out an existence without the community help that I think the Birmingham play has. I had hoped through my writing to encourage folklorists, theatrical scholars, and other interested people of that sort to begin to pay attention to this. I don't think I have had very much luck. To tell you the truth, I've seen very little of a professional nature written on European folkdrama surviving in America. I'm constantly putting other people in touch with the events, but nothing seems to be happening. We'll just have to keep it alive for another century, at least.

One of the things that I'm personally concerned about is the fact that even here the Bethlehem play seems now to have been narrowed down to the Midnight Mass performance alone.

I came across it over 10 years ago. I understand the problem that we are seeing. This is not the century, perhaps, for people to want to wander the streets dressed as angels and wild-men, carrying axes that they are not prepared to use. Still, I would like to use the mere fact that I'm standing up here, at the podium, with an audience in front of me, to encourage the homeowners in this neighborhood to invite the troupe in: into homes, into Monoky's Bar, and into other gathering places. The more you do so, the more the play will retain the spirit that it has had over the centuries. Today is not like the old days when all sorts of people, from mummers to peddlers, could go from house to house; no, of course it isn't. But there is a restraint in the performance in the church. It's very beautiful, as you know, but there is far less of the appropriate rowdiness. It's not appropriate in church. The church environment naturally inhibits a lot of the rambunctiousness that you saw in the movie. I don't think I am giving anything away when I point out that the whole play was staged completely for the movie. It is never clear whether they are using the present tense or the past tense. We went to Takac's market to steal their sausages. Yes, but only for film; at the time the troupe wasn't doing that at all. Why not?

One thing folklorists have to worry about is putting their foot into something and affecting how it's being done, but I don't think I'd be doing that if I tried to use whatever podium I happen to have to encourage more private participation and local encouragement. The stimulus has to come from the people in the neighborhood, not from the players, who would of course feel like fools (and probably many times in the past have) when they knock on a door and the householder says, "Who are you? This isn't Halloween, go away!" Invite them; let's make it worthwhile for their sons, and for their sons' sons, and so forth for another century until the folklorists catch up with this. Even beyond a century. Let us preserve this not just because we're being dutiful, because the players are doing what their dads taught them, but because the tradition is genuinely rewarding. These things do change. There is always a tension between preserving what is there and allowing it to change slowly to serve present circumstances. It's not for me to say what those changes should be, any more than it is for me to say whether change in the past has been for good or ill. But if the Bethlehem Play is not being done for its innate rewards, for the sheer fun of it, then it's going to be petrified. You will have done it simply as a duty, and then one day, not at all. So do make it fun, and then enjoy it.

A REACTION TO THE BETHLEHEM PLAY: THE ROLE OF GOVERNMENT IN THE PRESERVATION OF ETHNIC HERITAGE

by

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Ohio's rich and diverse cultural heritage encompasses a wide range of creative expression. Folk, ethnic or traditional arts are identified with the many groups that make up the state -- groups sharing common heritage, language, occupation, religion or geography. Traditions such as the reverse-applique pa'ndau of Hmong women in Toledo and the embroidery of Mercer County's German Catholics; old-time fiddling from Athens County and Black gospel music from Columbus; the stories and legends of Hocking County loggers and the Bethlehem Christmas play of Toledo's Hungarian community, all enliven the groups which sustain them and attest to the strength of the state's multicultural heritage.

What is or should be the role of government in promoting and strengthening ethnic identification? Indeed, there are many excellent reasons for the involvement of government in the cultural environment of a community. Recent economic impact studies have demonstrated that strong support of the arts and cultural activities by government and business contribute substantially to the economic health of a community. Stable neighborhoods are created within the city through the efforts of local preservation groups, historical societies, ethnic organizations, and community-based arts projects supported by government dollars. Beyond the need to enhance a community's economic vitality, however, the role of government in support of cultural activities is firmly grounded in the principle of the right of all citizens to enjoy the state's rich artistic resources.

Government's role, however, should be seen as creating a climate receptive to the expression of the diverse traditional forms found in the state through local efforts, not as determining, through its grant support and allocation of resources, what ethnic traditions should be maintained and preserved. Government should support excellence and authenticity of expression, but it should not define community standards. To be sure, government agencies such as the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), the Ohio Arts Council (OAC), and the Ohio Arts Council/Ohio Humanities Council Joint Program make judgments in their allocation of funds and resources. As members of the public sector network of support, such funding agencies are accountable both to the individuals and organizations which receive grants and to the tax-paying public. Such allocations, however, should be responsive to local and regional needs and preferences and should be the end result of community discovery and action. "Ideally," notes Bess Hawes, Director of the NEA Folk Arts Program, "local traditions should be cared for locally."¹

¹ Folk Arts Program Overview: 1987-1991 Planning Report (unpublished)

But what if local conditions do not encourage the maintenance and growth of the community's cultural heritage? Government agencies may play an important role as a catalyst in the process. Strong partnerships joining government, the business community and the arts community contribute much to healthy cultural development. Such partnerships are most effective when they are intended to strengthen the abilities of local traditional arts groups and organizations, increase opportunities for traditional artists to achieve control over their own artistic production, and provide the opportunity for access to traditional activities by audiences throughout the state. In all such efforts, government agencies should encourage local "empowerment." Ultimately, it is the local community which must set standards and decide what is worthy of maintenance and preservation.

The late 20th century has seen a resurgence of interest in ethnicity, strengthened by the church, ethnic clubs and organizations, and service agencies. Earlier immigrant groups did not always enjoy the support of ethnic organizations to help ease the transition from one culture to another. As such groups encountered the larger society, they often sought acceptance and stability, replacing or discarding traditions which no longer seemed useful.

Interestingly, the renewed emphasis upon ethnic consciousness has arisen in this country in an era of advanced technology and moral ambiguity. In his article on "Pluralism: A Humanistic Perspective," Michael Novak notes that the emergence of the new ethnicity may be seen as rebellion against "mindless" and "soulless modernism." As the notion of the moral superiority of the modern is questioned, people begin to acknowledge the wisdom of their traditional cultures. "Thus, the examination of 'roots' has attracted both scholarly and popular attention. It is probable that a general law is here being observed: in times of moral perplexity and crisis, a reappropriation of the past, a search for renewal, gains impetus."²

Given the complexity of contemporary society and the inevitability of crisis, ethnic identification may be seen as a source of renewal and strength, a counterbalance to the moral ambiguities perceived in the larger society. "The Preservation of Ethnic Heritage: An Examination of the Birmingham Experience," has explored, in a series of monthly programs held in the Birmingham Branch Library, how a community reconciles unity with diversity. Birmingham has been successful in preserving and enhancing its multi-cultural heritage as a response, perhaps in part, to the enormous challenges represented by the larger surrounding community.

A valuable result of the Birmingham experience, from which other communities may profit, is the acknowledgement of the importance of a locally developed plan of action. Many communities throughout the nation are experiencing a similar resurgence of interest in the preservation of ethnic heritage. While agencies such as the Ohio Arts Council/Ohio Humanities Council Joint Program are aware that many communities are able to celebrate their heritage without public funds, government is ready to serve as a catalyst. By

² Michael Novak, "Pluralism: A Humanistic Perspective," from Stephan Thernstrom, ed., Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1980).

facilitating the sharing of models, by assisting communities to identify their artists and tradition bearers, by making referrals of folklorists and other experts to help with planning, field work and the collection of oral histories, and by providing grants for local projects, such as festivals and other celebrations, workshops and conferences, government agencies have an important role to play in the preservation of ethnic heritage.

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PRESERVATION OF BIRMINGHAM'S CULTURAL HERITAGE: SOME RANDOM THOUGHTS ABOUT THE "SUTNI" AND "LOCSOLAS" TRADITIONS IN BIRMINGHAM

by
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When Professor Ahern wrote to me in July to set up this lecture for January 27th, I said, "Oh well, it's so far away," and of course I said yes, because by then the videotape, the documentary about Birmingham, will be long finished and I won't have to worry anymore about it. But as you can imagine the documentary is still not finished, although we are very close.¹ Maybe in two, three weeks it will be finished. At any rate, at that time he told me to talk about social customs in Birmingham. Now that's a really wide subject, and I thought about it, and thought about it, and how I would approach it, and I decided that I will not cover the whole field, but instead what I will try to do is pick two social customs and go into a little more depth in their discussion. Now I have a slight problem with that because I have two videotapes that relate to one of the customs. But the tapes have not been copied to 1/2" tape. So, at present I cannot show these to you and will have to verbally get across the idea of what I don't have the visuals to back me up on.

Well, when Peter Ujvagi heard that I had accepted this lecture and when I began to prepare for this presentation, he said "You know Andy, you can only burn a candle at one end." (He's the one to talk, of course, he must have five candles burning at two ends.) But, I told him that there is really a Hungarian expression for that too, which is a little profane but I will try to clean it up slightly. Maybe it's safer to say it in Hungarian first and then I will translate it in refined fashion. In Hungarian the saying goes: "Egy seggel nem lehet ket lovat megulni." This is folk wisdom and it means: "With one butt you cannot ride two horses at the same time." Anyhow what that particular folk saying gets across is what I want to talk about really, that similar ideas and similar customs and similar problems are present all over, but the environment and the conditions in which a person grows up colors the way we formulate something like being overworked, or having to do too many things at once and not having enough time to do it in. The fact that in Hungary the horse was used to symbolize this indicates the important role of the horse in Hungarian life, in the cultural setting in which the forefathers of many of the people here, in this room, existed. Similarly, candles played an important role in the United States, and prior to that in the islands that compose the United Kingdom. In the British Parliament even today whenever they want to turn on the lights; someone has to move to light the candles. They are so conservative about this tradition, that they don't simply say, "Turn on the lights," the rules of Parliament require that someone move to "light the candles." (I am just mentioning this as an aside because someone will say, American conditions are not such that we are using candles anymore.) Yet, we still talk about candles

¹ Editor's Note: Urban Turf and Ethnic Soul is now completed.

being burned at both ends, indicative of the hold of tradition when we say that someone is trying to do too much.

With at least two Birmingham social customs, one is the "sutni" and the other is the Easter sprinkling, or "locsolas," I want to look at how they evolved at a certain place in Hungary, and how they were different there, and how in the transmission across the Atlantic, and being planted in new soil, they have taken on additional characteristics which have made them so unique to Birmingham. Neither the "sutni," nor the "locsolas" is the same as was practiced in Hungary or as it is practiced in Hungary right now. So to begin, what I would like to do is to present a model. I know you will say, "Oh, here is the professor and he is building models." But please bear with me; this model will assist our understanding of the way in which culture is transmitted. In other words, I want to provide all of us with a simple picture in our heads which will perhaps help us visualize how transmission from one culture to another culture occurs, at least in the case of these two specific examples.

Louis Hartz, a political scientist at Harvard, wrote a very interesting book which is entitled The Liberal Tradition in America. In this particular book he outlines how the American political system came into being. He says one of the major characteristics of this system is that it is really a "fragment of culture," not a whole culture, but a fragment of culture that broke off from a "mother country." While it is obvious that the United States has many cultural roots, it still had one mother country. The English fragment of culture broke off at a distinct historical time period. During this historical time period we had certain values, certain customs, and this fragment of culture was transported across the Atlantic, planted in new soil, and here the new American environmental circumstances, new conditions in a sense, worked on those cultural values and transformed them, transformed them to something totally new. The origins can still be traced, but in a real sense the product is different. Here we were talking about our political institutions, but this also applies to others like the Declaration of Independence and the values that are embodied in it, like the major values of the American Constitution, the Federalist papers or for that matter, Lincoln's classic phrase "Government for the people, by the people, of the people." All these characteristics, all parts of the cultural content, can be traced back to the seventeenth century, basically to the middle class entrepreneurial business culture of the seventeenth century, and Protestant, but not official Protestant, state culture, not Anglican, but all the dissident denominations that were not a part of the official Church of England. These were the people who left seventeenth century England, brought these ideas here, and once these ideas got here they slowly evolved. Nonetheless, today they provide the United States with a core culture, the basic culture upon which all subsequent waves of immigrant peoples could build. The political culture, the basic values are derived from that seventeenth century, and are basically entrepreneurial, middle class, and, as I said, Protestant in background. Of course, these have been diversified and supplemented by a number of events or processes. Here in the United States, they were remolded by the immigrant experience itself, and the frontier experience, and mass industrialization. These environmental processes, then, made those values more flexible and expanded them so that they would become the values of a much larger society with a much more diverse population.

Why did I go into this digression? Well, basically because you can look at Birmingham in the same way. Birmingham was also based on a fragment of culture. Birmingham was a fragment of culture that broke off, however, from the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Not just any part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, but most of the people (not all, because I realize that there are Moravians and Italians and there are many other ethnic groups here, and not just Hungarians and Slovaks and a few Ruthenians and a few Romanians) came from Austria-Hungary and most of them came from the the area, which at that time used to be northeastern Hungary, counties like Gomor, Heves, central and northeast counties like Ung, Zemplen and Abauj. These counties actually composed a very interesting blending or mixing of people. Most of them were Hungarians, but they also included a significant number of Slovaks, a significant number of Ruthenians and even a small smattering of Romanians. But, most of them, I say, at least those who settled in Birmingham, were Hungarian. Now, if you look at that fragment of culture in Birmingham (because here again we have to look at the time period just as when we evaluate the basic values of the American political system at large, we look at the core culture and the core culture says that we can trace it back to the seventeenth century and the influence of the glorious revolution in England, the struggle between roundheads and cavaliers and all that which is very far back but nonetheless which forms some of the nucleus of the original values of the original institutions that were planted in this country,) in the same, in this very same way, we can go to the last part of the nineteenth century and look at the Austro-Hungarian Empire and look at what the value systems were in those northeastern counties. First of all, we can describe what the class structure was like and the class structure and the religious background and what the social conditions at that time were like. Who left these original counties to try to make a better life in the new world? On the basis of this and Julia Puskas' classic study on Hungarian emigration to the United States, it is possible to develop a profile of Hungarian immigration. (This was published in 1982 and it has also appeared in English.) Julia Puskas has some interesting statistics on class background, religious background and all the other factors that relate to the people who left northeastern Hungary to come to the United States. And, a large group of them settled here in Birmingham.

Now, what should we note in particular? Well, that these people had achieved quite a blending already of different ethnic groups, but there was also religious diversity, to some extent, although the dominant religious groups were as in Hungary proper. In a sense, Birmingham is a microcosm, a small sample of what northeastern Hungary was at that time, in terms of its religious profile, and as I said in its ethnic, cultural diversity. Now, using that as the foundation, we can say that most of the people who came here were of basic peasant stock, agricultural workers; some of them came indirectly and acquired already a great deal of know-how in the iron and steel industries. A certain number were skilled laborers and a certain number were unskilled laborers, but basically the families were probably only one generation removed from the soil. And, in terms of their real background, they were of strong peasant stock. And, when they came here, they may have arrived in Toledo already with a certain amount of acquired urban civilization, whether they stopped in Cleveland (Cleveland was a stop-over place) or Pittsburgh or wherever, but basically what we have to deal with is a group of inhabitants who had strong peasant roots. Consequently, they were also very traditional in their religious orientation. They were very religious people who tended to

emphasize simple values, honest values. And they also had an attachment to the soil, which they could not get rid of even when they moved into an urban center. All you have to do is take a superficial drive through Birmingham today and you know that that attachment to the soil is still there in the third generation. You look into the backyards of people, the care they take with those very small garden plots is, I think, a carry-over of this tradition which links them with those counties in northeastern Hungary.

But, now let me be more specific and talk in terms of at least two customs, although in the process I may refer to a number of others also. Because they came from that peasant background, I should emphasize one other consideration. Because the Austro-Hungarian Empire did not value peasant culture highly at that time, unfortunately so many values and art forms were lost. When the officials of the establishment do not value something, unfortunately it creates, how should I say, self-effacement or uncertainty on the part of those people who had valued those traits of culture. Originally, when your forefathers came out, they could not bring with them all elements of their culture; sometimes they brought with them what they saw and what they thought were the values and culture of the upper classes. One example (and I won't digress any further because I think you have had the presentation of folk dancing before in this series) refers to the folk costumes here in Birmingham and other Hungarian-American communities in America, Cleveland for example, New Brunswick in New Jersey or I could mention a number of others, like Bridgeport, Connecticut. In every one of these settlements we saw that there was a standard Hungarian costume. It was really a Hungarian-American costume which was not really from any region of Hungary so it is not really a carry-over from Hungary itself, say from the county of Abauj or the county of Heves. It is not a carry-over from that at all; instead, it was the dress that middle class people wore in Hungary, when they wanted to be like "real people" in the villages. Middle class people sometimes went to programs where they acted out what they were too far away from in terms of their own personal roots and as a consequence they created this generalized Hungarian costume, which was not attached to any place, region, or location in Hungary. Instead it was a mimicking of the peasantry by the middle class. But we now have a reverse mimic. The immigrants who came to the United States had forgotten their own very specific embroidery and culture. What they brought with them was this generalized ethnic costume that they borrowed from the middle class. Now some of you may disagree with me, but I will try to correct any misimpressions I may have given you, by pointing out two additional examples. The revival of embroidery here in the community and the revival of folk dancing here in the community. Both actually go back more directly to the village culture, because in the meantime in Hungary a revolution took place. I'm not talking about the Communist Revolution, now don't misunderstand, but a cultural revolution which took place around 1900, where all of a sudden people like Bela Bartok (a great musician you are all familiar with) began going out into the villages and collecting the folk songs and collecting the ballads and the folktales. I know your library has at least one volume of Dezső Malonyay on folk art which was written at this time. (The Hungarian government published it in facsimile edition quite recently so the library might consider buying it; it's a five volume set, from the different regions of Hungary and on the different ethnic costumes, different customs, etc.) Now this cultural revolution lasted from about 1900 to World War I, just about the time that your ancestors came here, so that this revolution did not yet have the

effect of really making people change their minds. I mean, they did not yet become proud of those local, very local, almost parochial ethnic traditions which were really much more colorful than the middle class culture which they had borrowed, with standardized costumes, that the middle class had previously borrowed from the peasantry and simplified. Now, this is why it is so fascinating for me to watch what the dance group here is doing and what the embroidery group is doing. Because here there is an attempt to actually revive something that two generations forgot. Why did that happen? Why was there a loss of this genuine village type of culture? For one thing your forefathers, when they came out, became very busy as soon as they landed. They had to work and work hard under changed circumstances, and very likely they did not have enough time to do embroidery, or as much time to do woodcarving, or as much time to do any of those traditional folk arts which in an agricultural setting was much more natural, indeed, was a mode of relaxation, was something that tended to fill out the day. Here, on the other hand, long hours and trying to add to their financial base consumed most of their time. And then, some of the original immigrants did not even think of staying; they said, "Well, we will come and after we make a certain amount of money, we will go back to the old country and we will buy a little plot there." For most of them this was just a dream. They eventually brought out their bride or they intermarried here with one of the other ethnic groups, and eventually they became ethnic Americans in the sense that all of you are. But, the point that I am making is that there was really a gap in terms of the cultural transmission and that some of those cultural values for a short time were lost. Not all of them! Those cultural values which were not tied to everyday existence but were tied to festive occasions, like Christmas and Easter, those customs have survived intact and they have held up because those festive occasions were also church occasions, and in these instances the institutions could back up the desire for retention. It was not something that you did after you went home from work and you were exhausted after you worked a full day at the Malleable, or wherever it was. That was hard work. It was real work where sweat, blood and tears were involved and consequently little time was left for the upkeep of folk culture. It was difficult, under these conditions, to perpetuate it. Now this is not to say that some grandmothers did not embroider or that exceptional individuals did not nurture culture, but what I am saying is that the average rank and file person did not have the time for it. The exceptions are the customs directly related to the major religious holidays and also those customs which can be used as a breakaway from the drudgery of the week-day and an example of the latter is the "sutni."² The sutni, which also exists, as I said, in the American setting, has been transformed by the environmental conditions. The sutni did not require special attention but at the same time is functional. When you had a sutni (bacon grilling), you also fed yourself. So, it was a meal and you could also sit around and socialize. At least it had a functional objective and was not just something like, say, painting a beautiful Easter egg, because to scratch a beautiful Easter egg you needed to take extra time out of your days. So, only a few exceptional people in the community were able to retain either the art of embroidery, the art of wood

² " Sutni is the infinitive of sutes (roasting). The correct Hungarian name of this custom is SZALONNA SUTES. However, people in the neighborhood generally refer to it in the abbreviated form, simply as "sutni."

carving, the art of bone carving, or of Easter egg coloring. As I said, this is the reason why I think the revivals that have occurred provide cause for optimism. In part this is a consequence of new groups coming into the neighborhood, and I think especially of the 1956 refugees, because I think the 1945 displaced persons had a relatively small impact in the number of people remaining in the neighborhood. The refugees of 1956, even though in terms of numbers were still a small proportion of the overall population in Birmingham, they did have an important impact in reviving certain values. Furthermore since the 1960's, conditions in Hungary have become a little more bearable, and there is opportunity for visiting on a more extensive level; thus there is a possibility for cultural cross-fertilization. People from the Birmingham community, because they are proud of their Hungarian traditions, or their Slovak traditions, or their Moravian traditions, have gone back to where their relatives reside and have had an opportunity to see how they really do things there. In the process they see that in the villages, much of their folk culture, in many instances has been abandoned, and in other instances has been cultivated very extensively because it contributes to tourism. So, there are a whole variety of experiences. But, in Birmingham it has led to other consequences as well, such as the will of Birmingham people to touch their roots again. Consequently, people like Father Hernady, who consciously preserve, have brought out instructors on embroidery. Since 1977 a teacher has been to Birmingham at least twice. Some of you were even there when we did a videotape of the neighborhood embroidery. People were saying that in 1977 there had been a revival of the embroidery art here because one woman came from Hungary specifically to share her know-how with a number of members of this community.

Here we have another interesting development. Even though she came out with a number of original designs, which were from Kalocsa or Buzsak or Kalotaszeg, or whatever part of Hungary the embroidery is done in, you will find that some of the local ladies used their originality to change even the color schemes or to change the patterns, or to combine patterns. And why not? Birmingham is not Kalocsa or Buzsak. Birmingham is not Kalotaszeg either. Birmingham, in this sense, is a synthesis of a number of our culture regions. As long as it is beautiful, and as long as it is meaningful to that person's sense of art, and has meaning to them, it is worthy in itself. I have said too much about embroidery, let me get back to the sutni, because that is the specific type of custom that I would like to trace for you as to how it was in Hungary and as to how it is here, in Birmingham today. Actually you know more than I do as to how it is here in Birmingham. After all you people are involved in the sutni. I had hoped that the videotape on this would be available to demonstrate the difference between a first generation sutni in the United States and the sutni in Birmingham among third generation enthusiasts. Now again, the sutni as a custom (this may sound strange to you) but as a general practice in Hungary at the turn of the century, was really a middle class custom. When they went picnicking, they did a sutni. Peasants, the peasant society had the szalonnazas, which meant that you sat down at the table, you had your bacon there, and you had your knife, and you sliced, and I am sure that some of your parents or some of your grandparents did that. And you may know some that still do it, right. But it was not taken over a fire, it was already cured or it was already abalt and you just ate the small slices on bread. Now, I am not saying that, you know, a juhász (shepherd) or a csikos (horse herder) out on the plains did not take his szalonna, look at the

fire, and say, "Hey, maybe I can combine the two!" I am quite sure that a juhasz or a csikos might have done something like that and put it on a spit, and rolled it over the fire and put it on bread. But as a wide-spread custom, around 1900, this was really a custom of people who wanted to get away from the city and who, when they went out of the city, went to the parks where they built a fire and they cut themselves just one spit, which they carved, as it's called in Hungary a nyars. And they carved the ends, sharpened the ends and attached the slab bacon which they cut into chunks. They sliced it across in a number of ways, that, of course, varied by individual preference. I do not want to bring that up because there are a number of experts here who will contest what I might say is the best way. But anyway, what you have to do then is put the stick in the hard-back or into the thick end of the bacon. (I am not sure of the technical term for that.) The wooden nyars and the bacon are then put over the fire.

The sutni was a group effort; people would gather around the fire and you would have ten, fifteen, and however many people were involved, each one of them had their own spit (nyars). You combined the drippings from the bacon with onions and with good bread, and sometimes with strong green pepper. It's very good! Interestingly enough they did not combine it with tomatoes; that's an American custom! The BLT effect is an American addition! Everyone made their own combination, and that is what this videotape on the first generation would show. (I took this videotape this past summer at Lake Hope, Ohio, where a group of first generation Hungarian Americans came together and did it exactly the same way. They sat around the fire, each one of them responsible for his own bacon, for his own slab of bacon, for his own bread and the onions and everything that went with it.) Now, how has that changed in Birmingham? In terms of how the people do it, here it has become a ritual. It is no longer just sitting around the fire, singing, having a good time. Oh yes, you have to have something to make the bacon slide down, so you have to have something like beer, or good wine, or palinka. You do need that to go with it. It's the case on both sides of the Atlantic, as much in Birmingham as in northeastern Hungary. At any rate, the Birmingham sutni has become ritualized in many ways. One is that now you have a "twirler," you have someone who is responsible for it. It's no longer a group effort that everyone gets around the fire, but now someone is made responsible for it. The host, or someone who is a friend of the host, is responsible for the sutni. They cut up the bread ahead of time, they cut up the tomatoes, they cut up the onions and the peppers, and then one of them gets down and begins to "twirl" the bacon over the wood fire. And, not any kind of wood, the wood has to be special. Some people have given me a half hour lecture on what kind the wood has to be. But, at any rate, in Birmingham they prefer the wood of fruit trees, yes, cherry trees, yes cherry wood. What other kind of wood? Everyone has their preference. You cannot use pine wood because that smokes too much. Actually, some of those middle-class kids who go out into the woods in Hungary still use pine wood because they don't know what the people in Birmingham know, that cherry wood makes the best sutni. And, you need the twirler because you need experts. You need experts around the fire. You don't need amateurs around the fire. An expert knows that if you burn the bacon it becomes bitter. This I have been told a number of times already. Also, you can't burn the bacon. It has to be someone who can make it tasteful. Now, another factor that I want to mention is the role of women in the sutni. I have never seen a woman do the sutni in this neighborhood. It is a

man's job. Well, maybe I have been to the wrong sutni. But among the first generation Hungarian Americans, in first generation practice, everybody does it for themselves. Women and men are responsible for their own bread, bacon, onions and whatever. But again, this may be a misperception on my part; I haven't done my research thoroughly, I really haven't done my field research and I recommend that you go to a number of sutni. At the Birmingham Ethnic Festival, they have a number of machines doing the sutni, and that indicates the entrance of American ingenuity. Here you can get maximum amounts of drippings, not grease, drippings. That is really mass production. The one thing that really should be added to this is the ingenuity in making tools-- nyars --for the sutni. (On the videotape that I have, I could show you the difference.) The implements reflect sophistication and ingenuity. You know more about this than I do, but the important point that I want to stress is that the available resources of the new environment put their imprint on the process. Also, that this is an urban setting that transformed the sutni from the campfire type of get-together where everyone sits on the ground and everyone does their own thing to still another communal activity, because a sutni involves family or friends and family. It was and is usually a group activity, or at least the ones I have been to. So, you do not do it alone. I don't think anyone does it alone. It is a real social event that gets people together. I was talking about the technology of this, the technology of the sutni, and also the methods by which the bacon could be put onto the spit so that it cannot possibly fall off and so that you collect the maximum drippings. There are many variations of the technology that the urban environment has produced. The fact that people have acquired craft backgrounds, blacksmith backgrounds, or having worked in a place like the Malleable, or worked in a tool and die making shop, whatever, it has created this possibility of transforming a custom that was basically an escape from the urban environment to becoming a very attractive, very pleasant event in an urban environment. And, it has been transformed in still another way. In the sutni now, the place is relatively defined, it is more analogous to the American grill. It may not look like an American grill (although I have seen that variation also) into which they put cherry wood and over which they do the sutni. But, basically the structural features are a synthesis. So the sutni has been merged with a relatively small fire, a wood fire, which makes sense in the backyard. One expert, the twirler, is responsible for the process and he works it as if it were on a conveyor belt. The bread is neatly stacked, putting drippings on each one in turn. It's a very efficient American system. This is the visual synthesis, that unfortunately I cannot show you, or the contrast between them. Both however, have the communal atmosphere, a sense of solidarity, both are interesting, and both fit the environment in which they evolved. The important thing is that the custom is meaningful and functional. In both what remains continuous is having a good time with friends and family, having a good time, getting together socially, and this is important. Getting together cross-generationally, meaning it's not just the people of one age group that get together, but it brings together parents, grandparents, grandchildren. It's again a number of families. So, it's an across-generation activity. Maybe this part is diminishing in Birmingham, I am not sure. It depends on families but in this sense it is different than what we encounter in the rest of society, where people often segregate themselves by age groups. (If you are teenagers, you think what those old timers have to show me is not as important as going somewhere else.) In this sense the sutni is a cross-generational bond which, because it is enjoyable to all, tends to perpetuate that type of social cohesiveness.

I was also going to mention the Easter sprinkling custom, but I think I am running out of time. So, just a few words. That custom is an original peasant custom; it is not a carry-over from the middle class. (By the way, I did not mean to say that the sutni is not, or was not related to peasant customs. It's just that the popularization of it was a middle-class escape to the woods type of development, which of course in Birmingham evolved into something else, a pleasant get-together, a way to share experiences, food and drink.)

The "locsolas" (sprinkling) is a very ancient custom. It's probably really a pagan custom that has been Christianized, because the very custom itself, the sprinkling of girls and the sprinkling of boys, because it is reciprocal, is indicative of behavior regarding the reciprocal relations of the two sexes. The first Monday after Easter Sunday the boys went out and sprinkled the girls, and then the next day the girls reciprocated. This particular custom, think of when it happens, at Easter, and think of the important relation to the Easter egg and to the reward that the boys got from the girls for the sprinkling. (I'm not sure that's the way it is in this community anymore. In fact I know it's not, except in very rare instances.) But the egg was always the symbol of fertility, and so in terms of its origin, in terms of going back centuries, the whole custom for certain was linked to rituals, linked to fertility in pagan tradition, and it has been carried over and has become civilized. It has become a ritualized activity which also has become a lot of fun. And, it was carried over into the villages where generally right after Easter Sunday the girls would be dragged out to the well and held under a whole bucket of water. It wasn't just little perfume bottles that the middle class boys used in Hungary. The girls did the same thing to the boys the next time around. Of course, they didn't have to drag them to the well. They had to catch them unaware as they walked around a corner, but this activity in being transmitted to Birmingham, I'm not sure if it didn't lose that bucket of water effect. It now has the water balloon effect! I have one oral history I collected from one of the ladies here. She remembered, she said, that this healthy aspect was here too for a while. She tells me she was dumped in the horse trough over where Tony Packo's restaurant now stands. There was a horse trough there and that's how she was "sprinkled". Well, the point is that this type of experience added color, added a different dimension to the lives of people on these special occasions when a major event was celebrated, in this case on Easter. In other instances, at Christmas or whatever holiday we are talking about, in each instance this folk involvement gave meaning to the lives of people living in a real ethnic community. At the present time it is still alive for some in the neighborhood of Birmingham, and it is still important for many as part of a rich storehouse of memories.

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A REACTION TO: "STUDYING AND DOCUMENTING BIRMINGHAM'S SOCIAL TRADITIONS"

by

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I will be responding to and reflecting upon the statements made by Professor Ludanyi. I'd like to start by saying I think it is fortunate the videotape he planned to show today was not ready. Since it wasn't you got to witness something more valuable—a field-working scholar thinking out and articulating some of the ideas he has formulated about the nature of your community. You got to experience scholarship first-hand. I am reminded of what Emerson said in his essay on the American scholar, that the scholar is "the world's eye, the world's heart."

Scholarship is precisely what is being conducted through the Birmingham Cultural Center. Professor Ahern should be congratulated heartily, both for creating this particular program we are enjoying today, and for all his work with the Center. His efforts, and those of many of you in this room, constitute an intellectual probe into the basic nature of an important American ethnic community. And, unlike many such community-originating studies, yours takes into account culture in the most broad meaning of that term.

Often community groups take their culture to simply mean their history and thus confine their work to collecting oral histories or writing formal histories of their official institutions, such as their churches, schools, and industries. Of course these institutions do affect the life of the group and of course history is important; but culture operates in unofficial ways as well as official ones and tradition actually only operates in the present. I should clarify that to say that while it connects the present and past it only ever manifests itself in the present.

Since the 1960's studies of ethnic communities have begun to take this approach and focus on the present day cultural scene and the dynamics of tradition in it. One study of this type was Richard Dorson's work on the Calumet region of Indiana which includes Whiting, Gary, Hammond, and East Chicago. Published under the title Land of the Millrats (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981), this field study focused on the folk traditions of a region held together by the overarching influence of its major industry, steel manufacturing.

I was reminded of this book by the methods and approaches revealed in Professor Ludanyi's lecture. For one thing he showed a great awareness of the web of mutual interest which connects 'the old country' and an American ethnic group, an awareness that influence goes both ways. He was also aware of the importance of the class structure (upper, middle, and lower or peasant class groupings) to the folk traditions of Birmingham. It is something we as Americans tend to ignore because we are uneasy with this model of culture; it

runs counter to our democratic ideology. But as an historical model it is valid to describe both Hungary and Toledo in the 1880's and is therefore obviously influential in Hungarian ethnic Toledo in the 1980's. Isn't it interesting, for example, that the folk costumes displayed by the Hungarian contingent at the Toledo International Festival are actually middle-class creations, a generic "folk" costume for all Hungarians instead of being a costume from any one actual village tradition. When a class model of culture is employed much can be seen about the nature of ethnic tradition.

Another model, this time a conceptual one about ethnicity, helps us to understand the variety and diversity of ethnic folklore. It is the one developed by Dorson in his study of the Calumet region. With it we can see that the Abauj Bethlehem play/mumming is more of an active item of Hungarian folklore than most of the things we are likely to see at an institutionalized folk festival. Dorson distinguishes four "faces" of an ethnic group. He perceives, correctly I feel, that ethnicity is not monolithic. It is a set of meanings which may change in nature and/or emphasis when circumstances change.

The first "face" Dorson names is the "presentational" face of an ethnic group. It is the stance taken when insiders want to show outsiders the joys of being a member of the in-group. This face is seen at festivals and public occasions when all is well. It is not, however, the one seen when civic matters press an ethnic group. This one Dorson terms, predictably, the "civic" face of the ethnic community. It appeared in Detroit when General Motors determined to bulldoze 'Poletown,' the major Polish ethnic section of the city. It appeared in Toledo, with better results I might add, when the city fathers decided to widen Consaul Street which would have gutted Birmingham. This is a fierce face if necessary; it understands its power and the occasional need to wield that power.

The third face Dorson names is primarily the one on which Professor Ludanyi has concentrated. It is called the "communal" face. This is what members of an in-group do with and for each other, not outsiders. It is public but in-group public. The food ritual of the sutni is an example. If an outsider wants to find out about these activities, that's fine, but these are not the display items which are brought out for festivals to the general public. This is why I see the Bethlehem play as more of an essential cultural artifact of the Birmingham community than other emblems of Hungarian-ness. It has not become "presentational." It is not a museum rendition to show the larger society how it was to be Hungarian; it is a communal performance to substantiate for insiders how it is to be Hungarian-American in Toledo, Ohio.

Professor Ludanyi focused on two communal traditions, a festival and a foodway. Both were what Dorson would term "communal." Both speak of the meaningful connections of the group. I would like to give you a few examples from Dorson's fourth category, which is the "esoteric," or personal face of ethnicity. This face involves what it means for an individual, apart from the in-group, to be a member of the group. These items include beliefs, language, proverbs, folktales, and the entire realm of oral tradition as performed by an individual.

Language, of course, is both communal and esoteric, and thus it is the deepest connection the group can make internally. In essence the language is

the ethnicity. The automatic response a member of an ethnic group gives to the question "When do you think the group cohesion began to lessen?" is "When they stopped speaking the language!" As I sat listening to Professor Ludanyi it became very clear to me that his fluency with the Hungarian language was the paramount factor in his success as a researcher in your community. In every sense of the term he is "speaking your language."

But another communal-esoteric point of connection is the traditional oral narratives of a group. And that is what I would like to close with--a few samples from collected oral traditional narratives from Birmingham. These narratives were collected by students in the introductory folklore course at the University of Toledo and are in the student folklore archive there. I have made arrangements for these holdings to be copied, so the Birmingham Branch of the Public Library will soon have them as well.

The first passage I want to give speaks of the Easter Monday dousing tradition, definitely a communal event; but there is an esoteric factor as well in the form of a traditional saying, a verse all members of the group would know. Here is Anna Fabos. The collector is Ms. Pat Buscani. The interview took place in the spring of 1985.

Easter Monday dousing is a custom where the men sprinkle the woman with water; they say a nice verse like --

I heard there is a nice flower that seems to be
wilted and we just have to revive it--

It comes out nice in Hungarian. They have a nice perfumed water and they sprinkle your head. The real old customs of the Hungarians would take you by the sink and douse you with a pitcher of water. Some boys I knew picked me up on my lunch hour from work and took me home. My mother told them--no funny business, just sprinkle her a little on the head because she's got to go back to work. They took big pots and pans, put me in the bath tub, and dumped cold water on me. You can imagine how I looked. My mother was so mad, and said it should stop because it got out of hand. You then gave them an Easter egg or wine. Of course they were too young for wine and there wasn't any pop or kool-aid in those days. (ms p. 17-18)

And here is another tale, a memorat actually, from Mrs. Fabos from the same interview, which shows how vividly the experience of immigration remains in the oral narratives of members of an ethnic group:

Each person had to show a twenty dollar bill when they got to Ellis Island. This was to take care of their needs so that they wouldn't have to depend on the government. Three of my father's brothers were traveling with my mother, plus one friend was coming out too. My mother had only one twenty dollar bill between all of them. So my mother stood in line with the twenty dollar bill and then gave it to my brother and told him to take it to uncle so and so. My uncle kept my brother with him

as he went through the line. Then he gave my brother the same twenty dollar bill and said take it to uncle so and so. That's the way they came out. (ms. pp. 5-6)

Here is another version of the Easter dousing practice as told by Daniel Kobil. His grandparents Frank and Mary Langel were interviewed in the fall of 1979:

Another custom I know of concerns the sprinkling of women on Easter Monday. Men would visit the houses of the women and sprinkle them with water, rejuvenating them and imparting good health. Afterwards they were invited in to finish the Easter food and of course, liquor. Often the sprinkling turned into dousing. My grandmother told of her friend being dunked in a tub full of water while she was wearing her Easter clothes. On Tuesday the roles reversed and it was the women's turn to do the sprinkling. Any man, Hungarian or not, was fair game. My grandmother mentioned how there was a foundry in Birmingham with apartments situated above it. When the men came to work on this particular day, the women in the apartments above would hit them with buckets of water. While the Magyars expected this, the "American guys" who lived in other neighborhoods were rather surprised, to say the least.

Next I have a haunting piece of oral history which shows the vast difference between presentational and communal lore. The collector states that his informants had great qualms about allowing him to even write this item down. It has to do with how one tells if there are witches at a church service:

The thirteenth day before Christmas you make a chair. You don't complete it, you just make a little every day, so you complete it Christmas Eve. Then at night they go into the church. You go to church too with that chair but you have to stay at the back. (Then Kobil asks Does everybody know he's got the chair? Frank Langel answers) No, not everybody. The witches do. They go to church and the chairmaker is in the back and he's the only one can see that they have their backs to the altar. And then, boy, just before service is over he has to take off and run like heck or they'll get him and tear him apart. Yah, they'd kill him, tear him apart, because he knew their secret--who the witches are. (ms. pp. 5-6)

And one last item I give because it is a folk tale type which is widely distributed throughout the western world of folk literature, from Spain to Russia, though this version is clearly close to the one listed in the folk tale type index as a Hungarian version:

This man that got killed was the bartender, he had an apron on, you know. And all the men were drinking beer and everything and somebody made a wager that he bets that they would be afraid to go and get the cross from the cemetery. From the graves, from one of the graves. They bet him and he said--"No I am not afraid." So he went and got the cross. Now one guy

said "Now take it back. Let's see if you're able to do that." He left the apron on and when he took the cross back to the cemetery he put it through his apron. Then he got scared. In fact he got frightened to death. He died that night. He thought the dead were pulling him down into the grave. My father always said that story. He swore it really happened in his village in Hungary. (Kobil adds) Maybe it was traditional. (Frank Langel responds) No, no, it really happened! (ms. p. 6)

Well, thank you for your kind attention today. When the Birmingham Branch of the library receives copies of these interviews, I highly recommend them to your perusal. They are very entertaining as well as instructional documents which give you a fascinating glimpse into the oral tradition of your neighborhood. It has been a privilege to share time with Professor Ludanyi in speaking to you this afternoon.

A REVIEW OF THE BIRMINGHAM CULTURAL CENTER: A COOPERATIVE ACTIVITY OF THE UNIVERSITY AND A PUBLIC LIBRARY

by

Dr. John Ahern

Director, Birmingham Cultural Center and
Professor, University of Toledo

The activities of the Birmingham Cultural Center over the last three academic years have been varied. They include some projects that were quite successful and at least one that was a failure. The experiences of the Birmingham Cultural Center should be helpful to an individual who is developing a model for preserving the ethnic heritage of a particular community. At the same time, the center offers no panacea, no one method of preservation, for ethnic groups are unique, as are neighborhoods.

Birmingham as an ethnic community is surviving. It is a model of a community where diverse institutions and individuals have assumed the responsibility of tradition bearers. It is also a community in which on a Saturday morning one can see young blacks and whites playing together. This community did not experience the racial violence that other parts of Toledo did in the 1960's, nor did it become an urban island populated by one race. Although many poor blacks live in the housing project built in the 1940's, not all of them do. The lack of tension in the community may be due to its long history of good racial relations. In 1913, a black church was built. In the 20's and 30's, a number of blacks could speak Hungarian. There is a street in Birmingham lined with houses built by a black man for his children, and his heirs still live there.

Birmingham might have become another example of urban decay--not because of racial tension but because of institutional forces. In 1974, the city wanted to improve the traffic flow through Birmingham by widening its main street to four lanes. This would have divided the neighborhood. The community organized to prevent the widening. Individuals from other parts of the city who had Birmingham roots joined neighborhood residents in their protest. As a result of the intensity of concern, the proposal died.

During this same period, the Toledo-Lucas County Library (which eight years later helped subsidize the Birmingham Cultural Center) considered closing its Birmingham branch. The community fought back. To prove the branch was viable, residents organized. They checked out an extraordinary number of books. The accusation had been made that there was low circulation; the residents responded "How can there be low circulation? The shelves are empty." The branch library was not closed.

The community celebrated their two successes by initiating the Birmingham Ethnic Festival, which has since been copied by other ethnic groups in the city. For the last ten years, on the feast of St. Stephen, makers of ethnic food, dance groups and local politicians join thousands of others from Toledo to celebrate at the Birmingham Festival. Profits go to participating churches, organizations and the Birmingham Neighborhood Community Coalition, a political action group.

But the festival is only one unique aspect of this neighborhood. The bells of its churches still ring at 6:00 a.m., noon and 6:00 p.m. The bakery still sells nut bread; the butcher shop still offers "Hungarian specialties." There still are some Sunday church services done in Hungarian. Tony Packo's (which M.A.S.H.'s Klinger made famous) still sells Hungarian hot dogs. And residents still say, as they have for 50 years, that the less-well-known Monoky's cafe has the 'real' Hungarian hot dogs.

Hungarian embroidery classes are being held; the Harvest Dance--complete with costumes and grape stealing--still occurs; a group of young people and adults regularly perform Magyar dances; traditional sausage and noodle making still take place in church organizations.

All of this is important to consider when evaluating the Birmingham Cultural Center, for a neighborhood's heritage cannot be preserved, regardless of the amount of outside support, if there is not a spirit in the community. The community must believe in itself, its past and its future. "He seems of cheerful yesterdays and confident tomorrows." (Wordsworth, Book VII). A community that considers itself besieged, that is pessimistic about its existence, is unlikely to be able to marshal the forces needed to preserve its heritage.

Birmingham has earned the right not only to be preserved but also to be studied. Moreover, it engenders enthusiasm in those who experience its intensity. Such a person is Dr. Richard Perry, Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs at The University of Toledo, who, as a young graduate student, lived briefly in the home of his mother-in-law in Birmingham. Dr. Perry is also a member of the Toledo-Lucas County Public Library Board of Trustees. He was in a unique position to bring together the two institutions, the university and the library, in a cooperative endeavor that became the Birmingham Cultural Center.

It was his initiative that gained the support of the library and the commitment of the university's Urban Affairs Center. He was aware of the community's cultural wealth; he wanted scholars to learn of it and to capitalize on this urban resource. Respecting the professional needs and abilities of university academics, he did not presume to outline a program for studying Birmingham's heritage. As the innovator of the Birmingham Cultural Center, he was successful in involving university personnel because he respected their integrity.

Dr. Perry contacted Dr. Ron Randall, director of the university's Urban Affairs Center, who recognized the possibilities of the project and asked me to take it on. I agreed to serve as Birmingham Cultural Center director if the thrust of the project were oriented more to the field of education than to history or sociology. The Urban Affairs Center also provided two graduate students and a commitment that additional resources were available should needs arise.

There was a willingness to accept this as a developing project. Within the broad goal of involving the university in the Birmingham community and documenting the community's heritage, there was much tolerance for ambiguity. The tacit understanding was, "see what works." Given this ideal climate, much was attempted and much worked.

An advisory committee of residents was established whose names were supplied by the branch librarian, Pat Bromley. This group of 24 served as a sounding board for the three projects carried out the first year: video taped interviews, displays of memorabilia, and a course, "Using Birmingham's Heritage in the Classroom," for teachers in the area schools.

Given the target audience and the implied goal of the course, that project was a failure. Despite individual meetings with each of the five school faculties, distribution of the course syllabi, and scholarships of \$50 to any teacher in an area school who would enroll in the 4-credit course, only two teachers enrolled. Possible explanations for the course not drawing students include the large number of Toledo teachers with Masters degrees and the absence of any financial reward for the elementary parochial school teachers obtaining a graduate degree.

Given the limited enrollment, full scholarships were offered to high school seniors recommended by their principals. (The university has a concurrent enrollment program which enables high school students to acquire college undergraduate credit.) Four students participated. Teachers from other schools who had an interest in multicultural education--but not necessarily Birmingham's ethnic group--fulfilled the minimum enrollment requirement. We also took advantage of "Project 60," in which individuals over 60 may enroll in university courses for undergraduate credit at no cost. Three residents chose to do that.

When someone asked if members of the advisory committee could sit in on the course, the answer was affirmative. The invitation was extended then to the entire community. As a result, twice as many students audited the course as registered for it. The auditors were active participants in presentations on oral history techniques, family history methodology, the architecture of Birmingham, children's books that reflect Birmingham's heritage -- they even enthusiastically participated in a demonstration of cooking Birmingham's traditional food in the classroom!

We learned that there was support for a lecture series. The series was established on a monthly basis following the completion of the course and has continued for the last 30 months, excluding summer. Our attendance has varied from 40 to 105. When we reached 105 we were told to require advanced registration because of fire regulations. We are now restricted to 75 people.

In the first month of the project, the advisory committee, in addition to providing suggestions for the course, also named individuals and topics they felt would be appropriate for video taping. As a result, two graduate students, one a doctoral candidate in educational television and the other a master's candidate with an interest in gerontology, conducted eight multiple-subject video interviews, each approximately 30 minutes in length. The tapes were transcribed and published as a lengthy monograph entitled Birmingham Remembers, Vol 1. Topics include: "Dating and Courtship in Birmingham During the 1930's and 1940's;" "Athletics in Birmingham;" "Holy Rosary Church -- Memories of Church Cooks;" "Memories of Black Residents of Birmingham;" "St. Stephen's Church and the Preservation of Ethnicity;" and "Calvin United Church of Christ."

We learned that there are memories that should be recorded on video tape, and that it is important to capture a facial expression when someone tells a story about the past. We also learned that some individuals, which definitely includes but is not restricted to senior citizens, experience anxiety when confronted with the assortment of equipment involved in video taping. We found that with senior citizens, it is advisable to include in the interview group a person they know who is more comfortable with new technology. We also discovered that the quality of the final product was better when we taped in a studio, but the degree of spontaneity significantly increased when we taped in someone's living room or any other familiar place.

In addition to video taping residents, the graduate student in educational television became interested in documenting the Easter traditions of the Greek Catholic church in the community. She produced a 30-minute documentary which was shown on The University of Toledo television channel, 10 B. She also produced three cassette slide shows of Birmingham architecture based on lectures given at the cultural center by an architectural preservationist.

In the second year of the project, a thrust was initiated to involve the students of the community. Funds were provided by the library to support an oral history project which would include training young people to do tape recorded interviews.

Students in the community are enrolled in a variety of school settings. There are three parochial schools (two elementary and one high school) and three public schools (an elementary, a junior high and a high school). The principals of the schools were asked to identify students who either lived in the community or, in the case of the high school students, who had roots in the neighborhood. This approach resulted in the identification of two sixth graders, six eighth graders and eight high school students.

The students in the orientation meeting were offered the following contract. In return for sixty dollars, each student would attend four training sessions and several informal meetings, and would do four interviews. We provided a list of suggested lead questions. Following the first interview, a graduate student listed questions for the follow-up interview. The younger students were paired off and were told to accompany one another to their interviews.

We had drop outs. We learned that high school students--especially those with the type of social skills we sought--are very busy people. We lost two because our sessions competed with a varsity sport schedule. We lost another high school student because he was apprehensive about doing the interviews.

We told the students they would be paid only if they completed all the interviews. Some of the youngsters began their interviews, but procrastinated doing the follow-up interview. The sixty dollars apparently was not as motivating to the young people as we assumed. A telephone call to a parent, however, usually resulted in a quick response.

The young people exhibited varying levels of skill in interviewing ability. Age, sex or involvement in the community did not determine which students did the best interviews. Perhaps more extensive training might have improved interviewing skills, but it appeared some students had a natural ability to draw people out and to ask an appropriate follow-up question.

Getting people to agree to be interviewed was a challenge. Many names were nominated by various individuals, but the nominees were often not willing to participate. Of the 50 who did choose to participate, about a dozen refused to allow us to publish a transcript of their interview despite our correspondence with them indicating that they could delete, modify or add what they wished. Given the reluctance of some of the senior citizens to allow the material to be published, one might infer that the young people who initially interviewed them were in an awkward social situation.

Our interviews (which soon will be published as Birmingham Remembers Vol. II) indeed have documented the memories of a number of participants in Birmingham's history. And we learned that, in working with our student interviewers, the schools would have been a more effective institution than the library through which to organize the project. The schools would have provided a better forum for the students to discuss and understand their various experiences during the interviewing.

In addition to collecting data, the cultural center assumed the responsibility of preparing displays of photographs, books and artifacts. During the Birmingham Festival we fill a church basement with exhibits about Birmingham's past. Two displays were particularly effective. One was the superstructure, altar cloths, candles and decorative objects from an outdoor altar that has been used each Corpus Christi Sunday for the last 60 years. The other was the dance costumes of Mr. & Mrs. Grna, who brought them here when they left Czechoslovakia in 1921. They wore the costumes in Birmingham in the '20's and '30's on festive occasions.

Four exhibit cases were added to the main reading room of the branch library and a volunteer, Judy Balogh, prepared a different display each season. One particularly appealing display was of wedding pictures, veils, and the traditional wedding invitational cane. We discovered that many people were hesitant to loan treasured materials, in part because of fear that they might be lost but also because of a disbelief that others would appreciate their treasures. That attitude is changing.

This last year, our third, has been spent documenting what we have discovered. The lecture series, as part of this document, is being published. The oral histories are presently being printed and will be distributed. Our annotated bibliographies on topics that relate to Birmingham's past are being extended.

Our exhibit cases have been reduced to two, but a schedule of specific themes with varying contents has been developed. Photographs are being reproduced for use in repeat displays; some have been enlarged and hung in the community room. A lecture series has been organized for next year and the center will make video cameras and an interviewer available to residents who wish to record their past.

In part because of the popularity of the events at the cultural center, the branch library has been extensively remodeled. But more important, the activities of the cultural center have been effective in communicating to the neighborhood that Birmingham is indeed unique, that indeed it has a past that deserves to be honored and a heritage worth preserving.

A LIBRARY'S RESPONSE TO THE PRESERVATION OF ETHNIC HERITAGE: THE BIRMINGHAM CULTURAL CENTER

by
David Noel, Public Information Officer
Toledo-Lucas County Public Library

To first investigate the role of the public library in the Birmingham Cultural Center, I went to our archives and sought the beginnings of the project. I found three memos which explain much of the Birmingham Cultural Center's early evolution, from the Library's point of view.

The first memo is dated March 9, 1983. It is a report to Miss Ardath Danford, Library Director, from me about a meeting I had with Dr. Ron Randall, Director of the Urban Affairs Center, University of Toledo. We discussed a logical and reasonable division of work and determined those necessary contributions which each institution could best make to the project. The report concludes that the next step will be to assemble other prospective members of the team.

The second memo, dated June 28, 1983, is a further status report from me to Miss Danford. It notes that Dr. Randall has arranged for a lunch meeting with Dr. John Ahern, of the University's College of Education and Allied Professions. Dr. Ahern has expressed interest in becoming involved and has strong credentials supporting his participation.

The third and last memo is a report to Library Director Danford on a meeting I had with Dr. Randall and Dr. Ahern in early July of 1983. At that meeting Jack Ahern outlined possible plans for the Birmingham Cultural Center in an energetic manner. Two sentences best summarize the Library's view following that meeting: "Overall, I came away from the conversation feeling more positive about a possible project, and certainly with a much clearer idea about what might be done at the branch. That mood was due primarily to Ahern, who is a combination of enthusiasm and practicality."

The collective impact of these three memos is that the Library saw a viable project, concept and team, coming together. It further saw that all of the participants would have something to gain. At this point then, the Library had to justify its formal participation. That reasoning can best be organized and explained in the following manner:

A good murder mystery needs three ingredients: "motive," "means," and "opportunity." Likewise such a project as the Birmingham Cultural Center can succeed only if the same three factors are present.

MOTIVE

First, what is the Library's "business?" It is information, not books. The particular format of the information is secondary to the value and usefulness of the information itself. Thus, all formats -- print and non-print -- are viable means to acquire and store information.

Second, as part of the Library's mandate to gain and hold information for the community's use, the Library has an obligation to help preserve the community's cultural and historical heritage.

In short, the Library's motive was a desire to play a role in preserving the Birmingham neighborhood, in the fullest sense of the word.

MEANS

Quite simply, the Library had staff people and resources which could be helpful in the planning and carry-through of such a project. The Birmingham Branch Library, obviously, provided a meeting site and location for the Cultural Center. The branch staff could assist with events and activities of the Center. The Library system's Public Information Office was in a position to provide promotional assistance and help with various other administrative tasks.

OPPORTUNITY

It was the neighborhood! The rich blend of eastern European and melting pot America, simmered for nearly a century, was too attractive to ignore -- and too valuable to lose. The Library saw that it could play one part in the forming coalition. And the coalition's goal of preserving existing ethnic history, and assembling more, was both worthwhile and attractive.

And thus the project began!

EVALUATION OF THE PROJECT

Now, after several years of functioning, what does the Library think of the Birmingham Cultural Center? In short, the Library takes pride in its success!

The displays, thanks primarily to Judy Balogh, the programs, video tapes, oral histories, written accounts, and photographs all have helped preserve the rich cultural heritage of the neighborhood. They have also enriched the present as neighborhood residents themselves and non-residents learned, or re-learned, about their ethnic past. Inherent in this process have been successful efforts to transform memories and folklore into recordings and onto the printed page so that future generations will benefit as well.

Second, all of these actions have meant that the Birmingham Branch Library has enjoyed increased use by neighborhood residents. A library building without public use is a sad place and is not truly, effectively a library at all. The Birmingham Cultural Center has helped restore the status and strength of the branch library. In turn, the physical quality of the branch has been improved as well.

Third, the Birmingham Cultural Center project is a fine example of cooperation among several diverse groups, the Library believes. And since the Library and the University of Toledo are both tax-supported institutions, taxpayers have a right to expect such effective, cooperative use of their tax dollars. We feel that that Birmingham Cultural Center is an excellent case in point.

The Library's hoped-for role was one of assisting in the establishment and operation of a project which would benefit all current Lucas County residents, and future ones as well. With that goal in mind, we are pleased to have received the two letters quoted from below.

Birmingham resident Eleanor Mesteller wrote to Library Director Danford, saying "We wish to thank you for making the Toledo-Lucas County Library's Birmingham project in conjunction with the Urban Affairs Center of The University of Toledo possible. . . . This first phase of the program was most interesting and enlightening. All of the enrolled participants and those that came periodically have nothing but praise for the program. A new dimension to our lives has been created... Please extend our thanks to the complete library staff who participated and worked on the program. . . . We are looking forward to the continuation of the program."

The Reverend Martin Hernady, pastor of St. Stephen's Church, in the heart of the Birmingham neighborhood, wrote to Dr. John Ahern: "Through your efforts, the members of the Birmingham Community have come to realize and appreciate their rich heritage handed down to them from their immigrant parents. . . . With your work, you are making a great contribution in preserving its cultural identity and value. And, for this, we are very grateful to you, to your staff and to the Toledo Public Library system."

Nothing can please the Library with its role in the Birmingham Cultural Center more.

THE LIBRARY'S RESPONSE A REACTION

by

Paul Yon

Director, Center for Archival Collections

Jerome Library

Bowling Green State University

YO DALUTAN! Joseph Bumbulucz, a Hungarian, was my grandfather; Mary Magdeline Amerling, a Hungarian, was my grandmother; and Mary Jane Bumbulucz-Yon-Miller is my mother. This and my professional knowledge qualifies me for making a few short statements about preserving Hungarian culture. I cannot nor will I attempt to speak to you in Hungarian because other than a few "unprintable words" I have forgotten everything my grandmother tried to teach me, including what she told the priest to teach me. For the first five years of my life I for all practical purposes was raised in a Hungarian household. My parents both worked and my grandmother took it upon herself to acquaint me with "right and wrong," religion, and, above all, entertainment. Usually, after the Friday night rosary my grandmother would ask me to sing or recite Hungarian songs or verse. In exchange for this the muddinnannies would bestow upon me kisses, dimes and nickles. Therefore, upon completion of my comments I shall again solicit you, in light of inflation, your quarters and half-dollars.

I am honored to be here today to comment on a project which I strongly believe is of great importance to this community and Toledo, specifically the Birmingham Cultural Center. Established within a relatively short time, with the cooperation of the Toledo-Lucas County Public Library, the University of Toledo, and a determined community, the Center serves as a model for the preservation of Hungarian culture and heritage. Through the efforts of Dr. John Ahern, David Noel, Pat Bromley, Linda Calcumuggio, the staff of the Toledo-Lucas County Public Library's Local History Room, and Toledo Councilman Peter Ujvagi, the Cultural Center is the focus point of community activity and pride.

Documenting the history of the Birmingham community has not been easy. John Hrivnyak in his thesis "Birmingham: Toledo's Hungarian Community" (1975) found that the Toledo Blade argued, some forty years ago, that the "so-called foreign neighborhoods in our large cities will, after a few years, no longer exist as such. By the change something will be lost also by the disappearance of picturesque garb and customs of Old World countries." The Blade further quotes, "as the years pass, the older first-generation members of the Hungarian community also pass away. With them are buried many of the customs, traditions, and heritage of a European country and ethnic community rich in tradition, which began in the early 1890's when the first Hungarians settled in Toledo."

Today, the "Birmingham Experience" is a success. The Cultural Center stands as a community's landmark and resource to collect, preserve, and make accessible those sources both primary and secondary, that reflect the tradition so noted in Mr. Hrivnyak's thesis. Through the Birmingham Cultural Center we

have successfully witnessed the cooperative spirit of academia and a concerned public. With the assistance of the University of Toledo's Urban Affairs Center, classes, public lectures and meetings have stimulated the community to address critical issues surrounding the preservation of Hungarian culture. In this instance the Cultural Center is more than a library. It is a symbol of unity and pride within the Hungarian community. It provides the necessary resources: space, staff, and monies to enhance the permanent preservation of Birmingham's culture. It also serves to "outreach" the community by providing exhibit areas for archival materials and items of material culture such as the fine embroidery currently on display. A significant book collection is beginning to take shape. The Center must continue to seek those printed materials both in Hungarian and English in an effort to expand the collection.

The Birmingham Cultural Center also must serve as a regional mini-repository for those materials generated via this project. More specifically, the audio and video tapes must be preserved and made accessible. They most certainly reflect the community's personality when examined. As archivists we must continue to investigate modern technology including optical and laser disks to insure the permanency of these media formats and thus this community's history.

The University-Library-Community coalition is successful or we would not have interested people such as yourselves attending these community presentations. Through this successful coalition, the Cultural Center should continue to utilize the expertise of James Marshall and his staff at the Local History Department at the Toledo-Lucas County Public Library. In short, Jim and his staff will bring continuity to the projects.

The interviews, oral histories, tapes, videos, lectures, seminars, papers and etc. are important and do contribute to preserving the Hungarian Culture. However, as an archivist, I am overly concerned about the written history of this community. The church's role in the development of this community is phenomenal. It has significantly contributed to the economic, political, and social development for over ninety years. Your history, our history, is recorded in the vital statistics, parish bulletins, anniversary books, club records, photographs, scrapbooks, etc. The three neighborhood churches constitute three very distinct independent collections. If the Cultural Center is to be that vehicle of information, then a unified collection should be a consideration.

Leads developed from a very successful oral history program must be followed-up. Interviewers must serve as information gatherers. Collections of family correspondence must be readily identified and acquisitioned. Letters and records retained by community members, as well as those items that may have been sent to the "Old Country," need to be collected.

A considerable amount of resources have been allocated for contemporary history, but whatever became of those records that documented early life in the Birmingham District? For example, are records still available for the Verhovay Aid Society, the American-Hungarian Citizens League, Eastside Catholic Community House, the first Military Musical Ensemble, Rakoczy Band, St. Stephens Band, the 1935 Crimson Coaches (world champion softball team), the Sandlot Football League, and Joe Kristoff, the best known Birmingham bowler? If this community was so labor-oriented where are the records associated with

the working men and women? Have those collections of the National Malleable Casting Company, American Shipbuilding, National Biscuit, Rail Light, Ohio Brick, Trotter Lumber, and Soldiers Brothers Trucking been preserved? I contend that they have not. Who will collect, preserve, and make available to future generations, whether Hungarian or not, the records of the National Bakery, Democratic/Republican Clubs, the Birmingham Business Association, Birmingham P.T.A., and the Birmingham Neighborhood Coalition?

In summary, the Birmingham Cultural Center obviously is a success and will continue to be vital to this community's culture and heritage. However, inevitable events, as outlined in Mr. Hrivnyak's thesis, may come to fruition if the community and future generations do not act now. But, the Center's continued success and direction will depend upon its community and future generations.

Thank you for extending to me this opportunity to share with you my observations about the Cultural Center and the community.

A CHURCH'S RESPONSE TO THE PRESERVATION OF ETHNIC HERITAGE: RELIGIOUS TRADITIONS AT ST. STEPHEN'S CHURCH*

by

Yolanda Danyi Szuch, M.A.

Author: History of St. Stephen's Church

INTRODUCTION

The Hungarian immigrants were very busy in this new country. For example, many of us here in this room know it was the sweat of our parents or grandparents that fueled the factories along Front Street. Work was their life. Hard work. Sometimes seven day weeks. Eleven to twelve hours a day. As a result, as Dr. Ludanyi mentioned, much of the folk art (such as embroidery, or wood or bone carving) could not be practiced.

But the traditions which did survive for these Hungarian people in this transition from the Old Country to America were those traditions tied to festive occasions--especially church occasions. The church was the institution which could back up the customs.

Those customs directly linked to religious holidays or those tied to escaping the drudgery of their workday survived very well.

It is the Hungarian religious customs practiced at St. Stephen's Church that we will review today.

HUNGARIAN LANGUAGE

The Hungarian language is important in this discussion about religious traditions because language and faith are entwined. The Hungarians have Hungarian prayers and hymns. There were and are many parishioners who prefer saying their prayers in Hungarian.

Father Hernady feels it is very important to encourage a parishioner's Hungarian prayer language. He feels it is also important to retain the old Hungarian church hymns. Preservation of the Hungarian culture enhances one's role in church; it keeps the people there. Father explains a parishioner's feelings in this way: "If I can't have it special in my Hungarian church, I can go to any other church."

The Hungarian Mass has been special for the Hungarian people. There was a very strict church rule before the 1960's that you had to sing Latin when you have a High Mass. But, vernacular singing during Mass was customary in Hungary ever since the Protestant Revolt. Father Hernady said, "That's the nice part of Hungarian Liturgy--one hymn has the appropriate verse for the different parts of the Mass."

* Condensed from the original presentation, March 24, 1986.

So, before Vatican II introduced vernacular liturgy for others, St. Stephen's already used the Hungarian hymns and prayers--but this was done "quietly."

Then in 1964 Father Hernady received permission from Bishop Rehring to use an official text for the Hungarian usage in the Divine Liturgy in some of the Sunday, Holy Day and weekday Masses. Therefore, the use of Hungarian in the celebration of Mass was now "officially" approved in those parts of the Mass where English was then allowed.

When Msgr. Eordogh was the Pastor at St. Stephen's, he had the older grade school children (6th, 7th, and 8th graders) attend the 10:00 Mass on Sunday and then write in English what was said in the sermon. The children had to bring this assignment to school. The first line had to be: "In Christ, my dear people" (Kristusban Kedves hveim). This assignment stopped by the 1930's.

Also, at the end of 10:00 Mass, the people sang the Hungarian National Anthem, as they walked out of church. This practice stopped by World War I.

Until 1978, there were two Hungarian services on Sunday. The 7:30 morning Mass was discontinued, but the 10 o'clock Hungarian Mass is still said every Sunday.

On Palm Sunday, St. Stephen's Men's Choir still sings the Passion in Hungarian at the 10:00 morning Mass.

We should mention that in the earliest years of the church's history through the 1920's, plays were performed in Hungarian only. Some of these plays were religious in nature. For many years there were also Easter and Christmas plays to celebrate those holidays.

CHURCH TRADITIONS

Parishioners celebrated Mass in the first church on New Year's Day in 1899. They followed the Hungarian tradition in many Hungarian villages of assigned seats. In Toledo at St. Stephen's, men would sit on the right side (the single men in the right side aisle), and the women on the left side (the single women in the left side aisle). So even married couples were separated in church. This tradition gradually stopped in the 1930's. The young children were to sit with their appropriate class at the 8:00 a.m. Mass, and the 6th, 7th, and 8th graders went to the 10:00 a.m. Mass. Mothers would go to the early Mass (sometimes the 6:00 a.m. Mass, celebrated when there would be two priests serving the parish) so that they could go home and start dinner.

Every month the assigned men of the parish collected church dues on the first Sunday, going door to door in the neighborhood. This practice continued until 1947, although people did continue to collect door to door for other purposes, such as the Parish Drives. Father Hernady said there were no door-to-door collectors in Hungary; this was only a practice here in the neighborhood.

The design of the church itself is the style of architecture widely used in Hungary, where through past ages, it had been adopted as the national church style. The architectural treatment is the Early Christian Basilican with certain features of the churches of Northern Italy and of Spain from the early Renaissance.

Much of the artwork relates to the history of Hungarian saints. The paintings and beautiful stained-glass windows depict scenes from the lives of the Hungarian saints--such as, St. Stephen, his son St. Emery, St. Elizabeth, St. Ladislaus, and St. Margaret.

The Rorate Mass during Advent, an Austro-Hungarian custom, was very popular in the Folk Liturgy in Hungary, celebrating the Mass of the Blessed Virgin. "Rorate" is the first word of the Mass. It was characteristic in Hungary to celebrate the Mass in the very early morning when it was still dark. When the people came out of church, it would be daylight, symbolizing the belief that Christ is the Light of the world. At St. Stephen's in the early years, a Rorate (5:00 a.m.) Mass would be held during Advent. Mrs. Gottfried said people would look to see if the tower light was on. If so, the Rorate Mass would be held. If there was no light, a funeral service would be held, and there was no Rorate Mass.

Mary Bence said the 5 o'clock Rorate remained through the 1950's; it then changed to 6:00 a.m. and then 6:30 a.m. Since 1976, when the assistant priest left, only the Angelus after the 8:00 a.m. Mass remains.

"THE IRISH MADONNA"

At the dedication ceremonies of the Church in 1914, Bishop Schrembs presented an oil painting of the Blessed Virgin Mother, Our Lady of Gyor. This painting, referred to as "The Irish Madonna," is a copy of the original painting presented to Bishop John Pusky of Gyor, Hungary by a Bishop of Ireland, Dr. Walter Lynch.

Back in the 17th Century, Bishop Lynch had left Ireland during the early Post-Reformation period, when the British were persecuting Catholics in Ireland. Carrying with him a painting of the Virgin and Child, which he prized very highly, Bishop Lynch first arrived in Brussels for a short time, but eventually found sanctuary in Hungary, with Bishop Pusky, Bishop of Gyor. In a very short time Bishop Lynch was made Arch Deacon of Papa and auxiliary Bishop of the Diocese in the year 1655.

Bishop Lynch died in exile among his beloved Hungarian benefactors July 14, 1663, and his remains lie in the vault beneath the Cathedral of Gyor. After the death of Bishop Lynch, the painting passed into the possession of the Cathedral and was hung on the wall near the altar dedicated to St. Anne.

On March 17, 1697, while Mass was being celebrated on St. Patrick's Day, the painting was reported to have a bloody sweat, which continued for three hours.

Toledo's Bishop Schrembs was moved by what he heard about Bishop Lynch and "The Irish Madonna." He obtained a copy of the painting when in

Hungary and presented it to St. Stephen's Church, to honor the Magyars of Toledo in 1914.

It wasn't until 1942, however, that the painting was displayed. A passage from a booklet "In Honor of Madonna of Ireland" explained:

A beautiful shrine of the "Irish Madonna" has been erected and was dedicated on September 27, 1942, in St. Stephen's Church, Toledo, Ohio, by Bishop Karl J. Alter. The shrine is located on the right side altar as one enters the church. The altar harmonizes with the remainder of the newly decorated church. Above the altar painted on a canvas 13 ft. by 7 ft. is portrayed the reception of the painting of the "Madonna of Ireland" by Archbishop Schrembs from the hands of Bishop Varady. The painting is enclosed in a beautiful gold frame magnificently designed. Over the tabernacle stands our copy of the "Irish Madonna."

It is our purpose to have a perpetual novena in honor of the "Madonna of Ireland" with devotions on Saturday of each week. A solemn novena will be held before the Feast of St. Patrick, March 17, and before the Feast of the Assumption, August 15. The purpose of this is to show due reverence and honor to Our Blessed Mother by dedicating ourselves to her and to help in whatever small way we can to lend others to love her and sanctify their own souls.

Services consisted of Novena exercises, sermon and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.

In 1966, the Hungarian artist Peter Prekop sent the Madonna mosaic from Italy. This mosaic now serves as the background for the picture.

Parishioner Mary Bence reports that the March Novena was in English, while the August Novena was in Hungarian. The other Novenas held throughout the year would alternate each week, one being in Hungarian and one in English; this would depend on the assistant priest as to whether he could speak Hungarian. Then in 1970, the parishioners had voted to hold a Saturday Mass, which began on January 3, 1970. The continuous Saturday Novenas were no longer held, and only the March Novena continues to the present time.

Rosary Devotions to the Blessed Mother were practiced in Austria, Hungary and Germany during the Post-Reformation period. In Hungary it was celebrated with the entire village coming to church every night in October to say the rosary. The altar was full of flowers. (Fr. Hernady 3/12/86.)

At St. Stephen's Rosary Devotions to the Blessed Mother are held in October. In May there is a Litany of the Blessed Mother, which involves invocations to her. Mrs. Emery (Betty Kertesz) Zigrai remembers the community, young and old, in the 1930's going daily at night (about 7:00 p.m.) for the May and October devotions, which at that time were held in Hungarian. (Mrs. Gottfried said Father Reinick, who came to St. Stephen's in 1939, began saying devotions in English on alternate weeks.) This is typical of Hungarian devo-

tional life, which traces its roots back to the Catholic Restoration in the 16th Century. The Rosary Devotions in October now include rosary recitation and Mass on Wednesday, and the rosary recitation and Benediction on Friday. The May Devotions now include a Mass on Wednesday, with Benediction and the Litany of the Blessed Mother on Friday.

Through the 1950's, St. Stephen's had Benediction every Sunday at 2:00 p.m. In the early years, all the grade school children had to attend. Around 1981, only one service a month was held. Today a Holy Hour is held either the first or second Sunday of the month. The Rosary Altar Society has its meeting after these services.

As was found in other parishes, years ago St. Stephen's had sodality groups which honored the Blessed Virgin Mary. At St. Stephen's there were three groups: one for grade school children, one for high school girls, and one for single women. The months of May and October were especially set aside to honor the Blessed Virgin Mary. The school children would have a beautiful procession that included all three sodality groups, filling the church.

At one time, members of the Sodality participated in a spring event--the Coronation of Mary. This event stopped around 1967 and changed to a May Mass ceremony, still celebrated today.

The Hungarian people always had great devotions to the Blessed Mother. That's why they have so many organizations to honor her. Many of the Hungarian parishes in the United States were named "Our Lady of Hungary." There are more hymns to honor Mary than to honor any other saint. (Sr. Mary Louis, F.D.C., 3/15/86.)

(Note: The Forty Hour Devotion, practiced at St. Stephen's, is a practice of the Universal Church, mostly Italian, but it is not known in Hungary. Fr. Hernady 3/12/86.)

BETHLEHEM PLAYS

We have the Bethlehem plays. Betlehemes jatek is a folk genre familiar in every part of Hungary and in Hungarian communities within the present borders of Romania, Czechoslovakia, and Yugoslavia.

In the 7th century, Pope Theodosius had the relics of Bethlehem brought to Rome. Since then, there has been the custom of building little "Bethlehems," or manger scenes. Later on, real people began to replace the dolls, and gradually festival plays developed. (Karoly, p. 163.)

When the dialog and gestures in these plays began to become profane, Pope Innocent III banished the plays from the churches in the 13th century. Around this time, St. Francis of Assisi began using a real manger scene--with hay and tame live animals. His followers made this scene popular wherever they established themselves. The plays, once again respectable, flourished in the 14th and 15th centuries. (Karoly, p. 163.)

With the spread of Jesuit and Franciscan schools throughout Central Europe in the later 16th century, the priest-teachers often composed the

scripts that their students performed. Such school-plays continued to be performed well into the 18th century, and their scripts seem to have been adopted by adult amateurs, who combined them with older, folklore traditions. (Prof. Pentzell 3/17/86.)

We should realize that there are various types and subtypes of Bethlehem plays, not only throughout Europe, but in Hungary itself. The two versions at St. Stephen's and the one at St. Michael's are probably from different villages. Mrs. Ann Walko told me the Slovaks at Holy Rosary also had a Bethlehem play that stopped around 1970.

These folkplays brought to Toledo feature the oreg with his comic nature, but this is not always the case in other versions. Some of the Bethlehem plays, for example, are concerned with St. Joseph gaining entrance to the stable. Characteristic throughout Hungary in these episodes is the replacement of the expected "innkeeper" role by "the King," often identified as "King Herod."

Throughout Europe in Medieval times, mumming festivals (both religious and non-religious in content) used similar costumes as we see in the Toledo plays. The oreg costume bears a close resemblance to the wild-man or fur-demon mummers known throughout Europe.

But the oreg's, or Old Man's, lines in the Toledo versions suggest that the fur-clad man is not a demon, but rather a deaf, cranky, lazy, blasphemous old shepherd.

The white-clad shepherd costumes and the angel costumes found in the Toledo plays are similar to those worn by angels in the medieval liturgical dramas.

With the definite remnants of Pre-Christian ritual action in these Bethlehem plays, we need to ask in this particular discussion, of what religious value are these plays to the Hungarian religious traditions. It's not clear how the ancient folk mumming combined with the Nativity drama, as written by the priest-teachers.

Professor Pentzell, who spoke here at the December 16th lecture, speculates that the elements of the plays combined in the late-18th or early-19th century. It was probably then transmitted through the generations entirely by oral repetition. (Prof. Pentzell, 3/17/86.)

In Toledo, the Hungarian Catholic Church was not the official sponsor of the plays. In fact, the two versions known at St. Stephen's were being performed in the early 1890's, before the parish was established. Laymen alone assigned and acted the roles. The costumes and the properties were made and kept by each player's own family. When the parish was organized in 1898, it only informally sponsored the plays.

The church always receives the donations that the performers collect. However, no particular spiritual benefit is thought to derive from participation in the plays. The players have fun and maintain a group-identifying tradition.

The audience has fun watching the comic oreg. However, when the oreg kneels at the Betlehem (which is the model church with the Nativity figures inside), the audience takes the oreg's gestures seriously. He becomes a figure of redemption, thus giving the play its religious nature.

CHRISTMAS

The Christmas tree first appeared in the towns of Hungary in the 1840's and 50's, but has since spread throughout the country. (Domotor, p. 18.) In Hungary, the family celebration is Christmas Eve. (Fr. Hernady, 3/21/86.) Here in Toledo, Hungarians continued this practice. While I was growing up, we could not put up our tree until Christmas Eve. That was a must. Before electrical lights, people in the neighborhood used candles on the tree. St. Stephen's would always have trees decorating the church.

Father Hernady said Hungarian trees have the foil wrapped candies, as practiced in the cultural circle of Germany, Austria and Hungary. This was used on the trees here in the neighborhood when available. Home-made ornaments were also seen on Hungarian-decorated trees, such as nuts and apples, painted gold.

Of course, Hungarian cakes and cookies were a part of the holiday festivities. You had to have these for company during the holidays.

The trees came down after Epiphany.

EPIPHANY, FEAST OF THE THREE KINGS

Most Catholic countries celebrate Epiphany. "Foreign visitors in the fifteenth century spoke of the priests' collection of alms on Twelfth-day as a feature peculiar to Hungary. The benediction of the houses was also held on January 6th, when the first letter of the names of each of the Three Magi were written on the door." (Domotor, p. 28.)

The blessing of parishioners' homes with the traditional door markings is still practiced at St. Stephen's. "C M B" for Caspar, Malchior and Boldicbar, the names of the Kings, and the year is marked on the doorpost. Today a parishioner marks his Sunday collection envelope with an "X" if he wishes to have his home blessed. Over 100 homes were blessed this year. (Fr. Hernady, 2/16/86.)

Father Hernady stated that this custom is found in the territory of the Catholic Restoration (for example, Germany and the Austro-Hungarian Empire). St. Michael's practices this religious custom. Holy Rosary did until 1978. (Fr. Blasko did; Fr. Leyland did for two years, then stopped.)

FLOWER SUNDAY

Palm Sunday, the Sunday before Easter, is celebrated in the Christian Church in commemoration of Christ's triumphant entry into Jerusalem. It is marked by the blessing and distribution of palms in the churches to signify the waving and strewing of palms before Christ as he rode into the city.

Palm Sunday is also known as "Flower Sunday" in Hungary. Since there are no palms in Hungary, flowers were used instead. In early spring, pussy willows were plentiful in Hungary, so they became the traditional flower which the priest blessed and used in the procession. Palm Sunday is still called Flower Sunday, Viragvasarnap.

Hungarians in Birmingham still take pussy willows to church on Palm Sunday to be blessed. St. Michael's still practices this tradition. Holy Rosary also did, but stopped in 1976 when Fr. Blasko left.

BLESSING OF THE EASTER BASKETS

The blessing of the Easter baskets is a traditional Eastern European rite. In Birmingham, the Slovak people at Holy Rosary practice the blessing of the Easter baskets. St. Michael's parishioners still practice this folk custom. This tradition has always been practiced at St. Stephen's.

Preparing for Easter includes six weeks of fast and forbearance of simple pleasures. People practice penitence and atonement during the last weeks of a cold and often uneventful winter. It is no wonder that people celebrated the Resurrection of Christ at Eastertime with a spiritual feast. It's the end of suffering and of Lenten fasting.

Special foods are placed in a basket and blessed in church before being eaten at the Easter table. A pretty embroidered cloth covers the top.

Items include:

1. Ham or any meat: Some people prefer using a chicken, stuffed with Hungarian dressing. Others use a veal pocket with dressing. It could be sewed together to be in the shape of a lamb, representing Lamb of God.

This refers to the time when Moses delivered the people from Egypt. They were to kill a lamb, symbolic of Christ, and to use its blood to sign the two door-posts of their homes.

2. Kolbasz (Hungarian sausage): You can imagine the aromas in church!
3. Hard-boiled eggs: The egg has been a symbol of resurrection since prehistoric times. Christianity took it over from the ancient people and made it a symbol of the Savior's resurrection. (Karoly, pp.47-8.)

Certainly the egg, as a symbol of life and fertility, appropriately belongs in a spring basket. At St. Stephen's, many parishioners colored their eggs using home-made dyes, as was often done in Hungary. Some of these included: onion skins (yellow), green outer shell of a walnut, wild pears, sour apple skins (yellow).

4. Kalacs (Hungarian sweet bread): This bread is made of eggs, flour, sour cream, and milk, and is filled with sweets. It was a most welcomed treat after Lent.

Bread is symbolic of the Lord's institution of the Blessed Sacrament. (Jesus is referred to as the bread of angels, true bread of everlasting life. We ask him to bless this bread as he once blessed the five loaves in the wilderness, so that all who eat of it may derive health in body and soul.)

5. Horseradish: This represents the bitter sacrifice of Christ.
6. Csirka (cher-ka): This is a traditional food that may be included. Mary Bence's recipe says to boil until curdling: 6 eggs and 2 cups milk. You may add raisins. Put in a cheesecloth to drain. It then becomes a cheeseball. When it's cold, you slice it and eat it like a piece of cheese.
7. Butter
8. Vegetables, such as radish, celery, and lettuce for decoration may be used.
9. Some people include Hungarian nut and poppy rolls (dios and makos). Some include wine.

In 1986 the baskets will be blessed at St. Stephen's at 4:00 p.m. on Holy Saturday and at 8:00 a.m. Easter Sunday. (From 1965 through 1983 there were two scheduled times on Saturday for basket blessings as well as the Sunday blessing.)

In earlier years, St. Stephen's held an Easter Resurrection Procession in the afternoon on Holy Saturday. It was at this time the parishioners' fast ended, and meat could be eaten.

People spread throughout Northwestern Ohio come back to St. Stephen's to practice the tradition of blessing the Easter baskets. Father Hernady said it's like a homecoming. People exchange hugs and talk. They display their baskets and show the colored eggs. In Father's words, this warm homecoming is "the most beautiful, beautiful thing to occur."

In an interview for the Cultural Center, Peter Ujvagi related an interesting story about the Easter basket blessing. He said: "One Easter I did not spend in the neighborhood. I was living in Washington D.C. and I could not find a church where we could take the basket to be blessed. We finally found an Ukranian church and we went on Saturday afternoon to have our basket blessed. As the priest came down the aisle everybody opened their baskets. All of a sudden there were murmurs and everybody kept looking over to my basket. The reason is, we all used traditional tablecloths with traditional designs. Well, all the Ukranians' had geometric designs on their tablecloths and ours had all the Hungarian flowers. They immediately spotted there were some newcomers to the church."

I should also mention that it is this practice of celebrating the end of Lent which made the water-sprinkling traditions on the Monday and Tuesday after Easter so festive.

St. Stephen's would even have an Easter Monday Dance. And in earlier times, people didn't even go to work on Easter Monday. It wasn't just the boys who practiced the custom of sprinkling the girls. Sometimes the men had too much to drink. Mrs. Gottfried said the depression ended the dances and the day-off frivolity. She said the depression put an end to much of the Hungarians' good times.

CORPUS CHRISTI

Corpus Christi is a moveable feast (the tenth day after Holy Trinity Sunday) which is a day of thanksgiving for the institution of the Holy Eucharist as a sacrifice and a sacrament. Corpus Christi means the "Body of Christ." It was established in 1264. The custom of holding the religious procession outdoors was abolished in all but Catholic countries at the time of the Reformation. Parishioners at St. Stephen's (see The Blade Sunday Magazine, July 4, 1971) recall that in Austria and Hungary, Corpus Christi was a legal holiday. Austria and Germany still honor this day as a legal holiday, but Hungary's ability to practice folk customs is limited in its present political situation. (Fr. Hernady, 3/12/86.)

St. Stephen's celebrates the Feast of Corpus Christi with the Annual Solemn Eucharistic Procession after the 10 o'clock Hungarian Mass. The procession is a public profession of parishioners' faith in the real presence of Christ in the Holy Eucharist. This procession reminded many parishioners of the beautiful Corpus Christi traditions in Hungary.

Father Hernady relates that candles and flowers decorated the windows of homes in Austria and Hungary when he was a boy and that all the Catholics gathered for a feast day. Branches, especially oak for its good fragrance, decorated the altars. (Private Interview, July 28, 1984.) At St. Stephen's, parishioners would intertwine branches in fences (once located on the Church property and on the yards of Genesee). Friends of the parish who live on the Genesee block display holy pictures in the windows. Friends still whitewash their trees (and in early years the trees and telephone poles on the parish property) and prepare their yards for the ceremony.

Whitewashing the trees most likely parallels the "Old Country" farmers whitewashing their homes in spring, which was part of the cleansing and rejuvenation of springtime. This included cleansing the soul.

Some St. Stephen's parishioners say the four altars prepared by the Hungarians symbolize taking the Eucharist to the four corners of the earth. Father Hernady mentioned the four altars represent the four Gospels, referring to Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. (Father Hernady, 3/12/86.)

One server bearing a cross and another waving incense lead the way of the procession. Under a canopy (baldichin) held by church members, the priest carries the Holy Eucharist in the monstrance. Parishioners chant in Hungarian the prayers and hymns, which include: "Eznagy Szentseg Valoban" ("Hymn of the Blessed Sacrament"), and "Teged Isten Dicserunk" ("Holy God, We Praise Thy Name").

At one time the Simko residence prepared an altar, but this was turned over to the Sisters, then Mrs. Gabor (Elizabeth) Gottfried and Mrs. Steve (Elizabeth) Vamos. At the end of Genesee the Pederi/Vasko family prepares an altar. The Karcsak family had an altar, taken over by the J. Oscar Kinsey family (on Consaul) in 1983. Other families who prepared altars include: Juhasz (on Consaul), Szabo (on Consaul) and Kuchta (on Genesee).

Church societies would march with their banners. The school children in uniforms--as well as boys and girls in their Communion attire--scatter flower petals from the baskets they carry. All flowers of the spring season are used, whatever is available: pink columbine, iris, daisy, roses, phlox, sweet williams. The brightly colored petals--whites, reds, yellows, purples, and pinks--delight the eye and their fragrance fills the air. It is a beautiful procession of faith, as parishioners, shaded by the trees filled with singing birds, walk to the flowered altars.

ST. STEPHEN'S DAY, AUGUST 16 (CELEBRATED IN HUNGARY ON AUGUST 20)

St. Stephen, the first King of Hungary, who brought Christianity to Hungary in 1001, is the patron saint of the Toledo Hungarian National Church. It was typical of each village in Hungary to have a patron saint, with a festive bucsu (a bazaar or feast day) to celebrate the honored Saint.

At St. Stephen's, the numerous parish societies marched in church, displaying their banners. This practice ended around 1930. Tents would be set up and people would sell special hard pretzels (which were first boiled, then baked) and mezes kalacs, or honey cake. These cakes are similar to "gingerbread men" cookies, except they have many designs (such as hearts and flowers) and colors decorating them. The Hungarian newspaper, Toledo, described the St. Stephen's Bucsu held on August 23, 1936. The mezes kalacs was sold at a booth in front of the school and included the following shapes: heart, sword, soldier, doll, basket, and guitar. Parishioners say the mezes kalacs sold at St. Stephen's was brought in from Cleveland; Mrs. Gottfried says this was after World War I. Mezes kalacs was sold through the late 1930's.

A ball game would take place, where the Birmingham Terrace is now, involving a team from St. Stephen's, one from Detroit's Holy Cross, and one from Cleveland's St. Elizabeth. The winner of the first game would play the third team.

Before the present church was built in 1914, Mrs. Ed (Helen) Patrilla remembers the picnic celebration on the grounds (where the church building now rests). The celebrations included speeches, ice cream socials, refreshments, and Hungarian music.

After 1914, parishioners remember taking the celebration to Collins Park. After the church services, people paraded down Genesee with a band, then down York Street to the park. Some of the children carried Hungarian flags and some carried American. J. Oscar Kinsey remembers Father Eordogh driving his car in the parade. At the park, drinks and ice cream were available, but people usually brought their own picnic lunch. Music and dancing followed.

For many years (at least by 1930) the picnic was held at Suto's Farm. Other locations were also used, such as Getzinger Farm in 1939. Bus transportation was available from the Church to the picnic. John Virag's orchestra would play; drinks, kolbasz, sandwiches, and stuffed cabbage were offered. The children's picnic (a separate picnic at least by 1930) was held either on Parish grounds or a location such as Suto's Farm. It often featured ball games, contests, booths, refreshments, and dances in the evening. There were no picnics from 1942 through 1946 because of the war. Then the parish decided in 1947 to hold two picnics at Suto's Farm, a children's picnic as well as the St. Stephen's Day picnic.

By the 1950's, Steve Sabo's orchestra was playing at the picnics. The picnic held on August 24, 1952 was held on school grounds (and remained there).

In 1974 the Birmingham Ethnic Festival was planned as a celebration for the stopping of a Consaul overpass and of an expanded Consaul Street. People felt this would have divided and destroyed the the Birmingham neighborhood. By celebrating the festival in 1975 around St. Stephen's Day, the parish's St. Stephen's picnic was stopped. In 1984, however, the Holy Name Society revived the picnic festivities and held a parish picnic at Oak Shade Grove (formerly Eichen's Grove).

FESTIVITIES FOLLOWING A RELIGIOUS CEREMONY

Most articles describing Hungarian customs describe the people's love for celebration with good food and plenty of wine, along with dancing and Hungarian music. The Hungarians at St. Stephen's are no different.

Sometimes a band would play at a baptismal gathering.

A baptism in the Old Country was "a grand festive occasion for a very long time, sometimes almost equalizing the wedding in its splendor....Godparents generally played important roles in the child's life, and the godfather was often appointed best man at the wedding." (Domotor, p. 57.) This was the case at St. Stephen's, as well as the godmother serving as matron of honor. In Hungary, "on the day of the baptismal feast itself, presents are given to the child, and the feast itself is a picnic to which each guest makes a contribution." (Lengyel, p. 124.) People in the neighborhood often bring dishes of food or cakes to a celebration such as a baptismal gathering.

The baptisms at St. Stephen's even today have this same spirit of family festivity. Many families celebrate a child's first Holy Communion in a similar manner--some even do so at a child's Confirmation.

In the early years it was a must to baptize the child as soon as possible--usually the first Sunday after birth, following the Benediction service.

Now groups of families have a new family member blessed at the end of the month, after the 12 noon Mass.

Although relatives and friends still help a new mother, it was a must for many years to cook for her, until she recovered her strength. This was especially a practice for godparents, who often supplied food for a week: chicken soup, stuffed chicken, breaded veal, Hungarian cakes, etc. (Mrs. Anna Fabos, Mrs. Ann Zsigrai. See Domotor, p. 56.)

If you were called to be godparents, who still need to be practicing Catholics, you were considered to be very close to the family. Godchildren gave you pictures. You were responsible for the child spiritually, and financially responsible, too. There were children whose godparents took over when the parents died.

"Wedding" is lakodalom in Hungarian, and the word also means 'feast.' The party lasts for days, sometimes for a week, and there is continual eating, singing, and dancing. All kinds of special dances, with special meanings, are performed by the guests and by the bride and groom." (Lengyel, p. 125.) Weddings at St. Stephen's are not just family events; they are neighborhood events. It is not unusual to have five or six hundred people attending. (Fr. Hernady, 1980 Interview.) In fact, before World War II, to make sure people would attend church on Sunday, Msgr. Eordogh wanted all weddings to be held on Tuesday. He didn't like the two to three-day weddings.

Hungarian music and chicken paprikas dinners are a part of the celebration. People dance the czardas.

Before 1940, there used to be door-to-door wedding invitations. Several weeks before the wedding, the best man and another man from the wedding party, dressed in suits, invited people at their homes. A light, bamboo shepherd's staff, only three-feet long (which could be purchased in the neighborhood), was carried and decorated with a white-ribboned bouquet, including rosemary leaf stems and a white carnation.

At this point I would like to say I don't agree with Dr. Ludanyi's premise that certain customs brought over by the Hungarian immigrants were copied from the middle class.

Even his primary example of the bacon roasting, the szalona roast, I've found practiced by the peasants as a custom that has a real purpose in the folk customs of the people, not just following the middle class's practice of having picnics in the country. One example, in a typical village, "during the spring plowing and the first work in the vineyard, everyone has grilled bacon for lunch. The people of the field neighborhood gather and grill their bacon on one fire or on separate fires near each other. Should any of them have a hut or a shady walnut tree in his vineyard, the whole neighborhood meets there where it is cool, and eat and rest together." (Fel and Hofer, p. 178.)

"Tradition" in Webster's Dictionary is defined as "an inherited pattern of thought or action." People practice what they know, what has meaning for them in their lives. Most of the traditions practiced here in this neighborhood, I've found, have their roots in the Old Country culture.

For example, there is the bridal dance, where the "bride is for sale" and the people pay to dance with her. Recorded as far back as the year of 1050, it

was the custom of the young man to offer a price for the girl, usually in the form of animals , during the marriage proposal ceremony. (Domotor, p. 59.)

Words remain in the language, recording this custom:

elado lany -- "girl to be married off or sold"

vo -- word for "son-in-law" originates from the word vevo, meaning bidder

meny -- the word for "daughter-in-law," originally referred to the fur that was given in exchange for the girl (menyet = weasel)

Soup-making for weddings in the neighborhood often included making csiga, a seashell noodle. "On the Hungarian Plain the making of special noodles for the soup formed a separate ritual in itself and was accompanied by dancing." (Domotor, p. 67.)

At St. Stephen's until the 1920's, the people used to tie up the bride's hair, and put on a kendo (a scarf), indicating she was now a married woman. In Hungary, "for many centuries the ritual of removing the girl's headdress and donning the cap has been the symbol of reaching womanhood." (Domotor, p. 64.)

Many parishioners remember some of the cooks at St. Stephen's (Mrs. Mary Kavasonski, Mrs. Kekes, Mrs. Simon, Mrs. Barbara Lasnovszky) who would come out of the kitchen with a towel "bandage" around their hands, collecting money. This is an Old Country tradition practiced throughout Hungary. Complaining that the "gruel" had scalded them, the cooks would collect "gruel money." (Domotor, p. 64.)

FUNERALS

During its earliest years, Birmingham followed the generally practiced tradition in America, as it was in Hungary, of taking the remains of the deceased back to the family's home.

Mr. Hoefflinger, a funeral director located on Platt Street since 1877, served many of the Hungarian people who had settled in Toledo.

J. Oscar Kinsey's father, Stephen, came to Toledo in 1918 from Lorraine, Ohio. Stephen opened a funeral home on Front Street, in the old Bartok building near Packo's. In 1920 the business moved to a building on Genesee near Bogar and in 1923 moved to 1935 Consaul, which is now known as Consaul Tavern. These buildings were rarely used to house the remains of the deceased. Mostly those without family needed this service.

Changing tradition forced Stephen Kinsey to build a larger funeral home, and in 1928 he opened at the present location on Consaul.

When funerals were held at the home, Oscar said that in many instances the people had to remove a window and window frame in order to get the casket into the house. Furniture was moved around, and sometimes out, to make room for visitation.

A flowered funeral wreath with dark flowers, many times with a black ribbon, hung on the front door of the family who lost a loved one. A white wreath was used for a child. In Hungary, some peasants displayed a black flag outside the home. (Lengyel, p. 125.) In Birmingham, Masses were offered for the deceased's soul, but flowers were not in abundance. When flowers were in bloom, friends and relatives would cut them from their gardens and bring these flowers to the home of the mourning family. Many times an ordered flower arrangement would have a clock face designating the time of death.

St. Stephen's would ring the bells, as practiced in Hungary, to inform the community that someone had died. (Domotor, p. 69.) The knell differed according to whether the dead person was a man, woman, or child: three bells for a man, two bells for a woman, and a small bell for a child. The appropriate bell would ring before the church bells ring at 6:00 a.m., 12 noon, and 6:00 p.m., and they continue in this manner until the funeral Mass. The bells at St. Stephen's were changed to electric in 1958, and a special lever was installed for the funeral bells; however, this lever has not been in operation for the last few years. Calvin United rings the death bells, changing the usual 8:00 a.m., 12 noon, 6:00 p.m. bells to 7:00 a.m., 12 noon, 7:00 p.m. St. Michael's stopped this practice in the 1950's when they no longer had a bell ringer.

Hungarian immigrants brought many customs over to America, including some very old folk customs which originated when the people were pagans, nature-worshipers, before the coming of Christianity. Such customs strongly resisted the laws of the Church. (Domotor, p. 67.) Some of these folk customs in Hungary were similar to many found in neighboring countries at the turn of the century. (Domotor, p. 69.) One such custom practiced in Birmingham was to cover mirrors in the home of the deceased. This was to prevent any evils from coming to the household. (Karoly, p. 176.) Mary Bence mentioned that some families kept a draped cloth over the mirrors for a year, symbolizing the family's year of mourning. The practice of covering the mirrors stopped by 1920 in Birmingham.

As in Hungary, people in Birmingham would keep a vigil at night in the house of the deceased for two to three days. Two to four men would stay up with the body, while the family rested. The men honored their friend by not leaving his body unattended, thus giving them the chance to praise the dead man's character, his courage and his kind heart. (Lengyel, p. 126.)

The family would make sure these men had plenty of food and drink for honoring the deceased, and many people in Toledo can remember that sometimes the drinks encouraged more sad songs and poetry than usual. By the early 1940's, this practice of having the home serve for funeral visitation stopped. For a few years after that, only a few families requested this practice, many times honoring the wish of a loved one before he passed away.

Mr. John Zigray, who lived on Valentine Street since the early 1900's, would come to the home, about one half hour before the funeral service. In a poetic canting rhythm, he would sing, assuming the role of the deceased, and bid goodbye to the relatives and friends. For example, if a wife died, Mr. Zigray would sing: "I am saying goodbye to my beloved husband, to my children..." and he would name the children one by one, canting for 15 to 20 minutes, depending on the family's size or the laments used. This practice stopped, his

son Emery said, before World War II. Mr. Zigrai died in 1954 and nobody took his place in this practice.

Church society members came to honor their deceased members. The Rosary Altar Society would pray the rosary in Hungarian for many years. Hungarian hymns would follow. When Mrs. Karcsak, who led the prayers, died in the 1970's, the rosary was then recited in English. And the Hungarian singing at the funeral home stopped.

On the day of the funeral, Oscar said the deceased was removed from the home in exactly the same manner in which he was brought inside. The funeral procession, like today, was led to church by the funeral director. In the early years, the family walked down the street behind the hearse. Funeral songs would be sung during this procession. As one person mentioned, "These songs would cut your heart out." Some songs were for infants or children. Some for women. Some were meant for anyone who passed away.

In church, the various Hungarian societies would display the appropriate banner for its deceased member. The Rosary Altar Society, for example, still carries on this tradition and displays the society's banner by the casket. The members are honorary pallbearers and they line the aisles of the church as the catafalque comes in and goes out. After the funeral Mass, members carry lighted candles while singing the following traditional Hungarian hymn (translated by Mrs. Gabor Gottfried):

Dress in your mourning clothes,
All you members of the Rosary Society
Because one of your roses has died.
We will pray for her, in the name of Jesus, may she rest in
peace.

One member of our group lies dead in front of us,
In the sleep of peace.
She already left us,
So we are praying for her.

Pick up my body, dear Rosary members.
To my prepared grave take my remains
For my soul's glorification with the Saints
That I can go to Heaven.

After the funeral service at the respective church, it was a custom to bring the casket to the front of the church and reopen it for a photograph. The priest would come out with the servers and the crucifix, and the mourners would gather around the coffin. Sometimes a photograph was taken at the home, or the casket was reopened at the cemetery. These pictures were often sent back to Hungary, some say to show what a beautiful funeral the loved relative or friend had. These picture-taking sessions stopped around 1930.

Following this photo session, the casket was closed and the procession to the cemetery began.

Cars were not available for a long time, so horse and buggies were used. Although Oscar's father leased a hearse, even in 1918, many people didn't have cars. Before 1920, a few Birmingham businessmen had cars and would let a family use their cars, as a gesture of goodwill. In time, others in the neighborhood purchased cars and these people would take time off from work to drive others to the cemetery.

So mostly the people traveled to the cemetery in horse and buggies. Oscar remembers in those days it took about two hours to go to Calvary Cemetery. The people would put hot bricks on the floor of the buggy to keep their feet warm.

A family could rent extra horse and buggies from the funeral director, and by the late 1920's they could rent cars. By the early 1930's most people had cars, so the practice of walking to church in a funeral procession gradually stopped.

Sometimes the funeral procession would be accompanied by a gypsy orchestra. After the church service, the orchestra would play a funeral march until the procession reached the Ash-Consaul Bridge.

Oscar remembers one funeral procession in particular. John Virag, who played in several Hungarian Gypsy orchestras, was known as the King of the Cimbalom. When he died in 1946 about 50 to 100 gypsies from all over the United States came to his funeral to honor him. They played in a procession from his home to the Hungarian Reformed Church, now Calvin United. The Birmingham musicians joined the procession.

Although the people mourned the loss of a loved one, they celebrated his happiness. "In Hungary, on the day of the funeral, mournful songs resound from early morning, when the procession begins....The burial continues with much wailing and sobbing, but when the mourners return to the house of the deceased, the feast begins. There is a grand array of food and drink, and the guests begin to sing and dance as if they were at a wedding. They see it as a wedding, since their neighbor has become the bridegroom of Heaven." (Lengyel, p. 127.)

In fact, in most parts of Hungary at the turn of the century, the people would hold a ceremonial wedding on the death of a young boy or girl. (Domotor, p. 70.) In Toledo, some parishioners remember young girls dressed in white, as if a bride, when buried.

Gatherings after the funeral were held by the Hungarians in Toledo even in the early years. Oscar mentioned that some people came from 35 to 40 miles away. And as in Hungary, food and drinks were offered to these people before their long journey home. Even today the gatherings continue. Relatives and friends still bring Hungarian cakes and cookies.

CONCLUSION

The religious traditions at St. Stephen's Church have been and are rich and numerous. The Hungarian language itself has been instrumental in preserving a parishioner's faith and ethnic heritage. A parishioner's daily life, in close association with church occasions, has been filled with ethnic traditions.

The parish and its priests and the parishioners have practiced these traditions faithfully. This combined effort and support have fostered traditions lasting almost ninety years, thus providing an ethnic heritage to be cherished by today's parishioners.

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CULTURAL DOCUMENTATION AND LOW BUDGET VIDEO

THE STORY OF "COMMUNITY, CULTURE, CHURCH, AND CHANGE"

by
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Editor's Note: Heritage implies the past. Preservation of heritage, however, should employ all possible means, both familiar and new approaches, to document and encourage the maintenance of traditions. During the first year the project was fortunate to have on its staff a uniquely talented graduate student in the field of educational media, Rosemary Johnson-Kurek. Her video tape on the Easter traditions was shown on a Toledo television channel and deserved the recognition it received.

In March, there were two lectures. The first was on the history of St. Stephen's Church; the second consisted of a viewing of the Johnson-Kurek videotape followed by a discussion of its significance by the pastor and the producer. For the purposes of this publication the producer, Rosemary Johnson-Kurek, was asked to record her thoughts on the role of the video and the preservation of ethnic heritage.

As the video boom continues in post-secondary institutions many more programs of the nature of the Birmingham Culture Center will incorporate video work in their projects. Video equipment has become more accessible because it has become more affordable and portable. This, in turn, has made it a more viable adjunct to the traditional methods of research, instruction, and information gathering and dissemination. Video is no longer limited to the development of closed circuit ITV or elaborate telecourses. Individual departments may find themselves producing single issue videos for a limited audience and specialized dissemination. Video clearly has a role to play in the hands of the field researcher. However, it is not a spice to perk up a project with just a dash of effort. Its use is just as apt to create problems as it is to solve them.

Those who aren't familiar with video production may find themselves at odds with the medium. The purpose here is to describe the production of "Community, Culture, Church, and Change," the final video produced for the Birmingham Culture Center project. It is hoped that this analysis will pave the way for those project developers who find themselves, for the first time, using video as part of a larger program. Video is a medium of limitations and these limitations are nowhere more evident than in projects like the Birmingham project. Such programs would tend to share some of the following characteristics with the Birmingham Culture Center project.

- * Multiple sponsorship among academic institutions, public agencies, and/or community organizations
- * Project is only one of the many activities of these sponsoring agencies
- * Responsible people and departments within the sponsoring agencies are dependent on the cooperation of other people and departments that may not be directly involved in the project
- * Contributions of sponsoring agencies are matched or supplemented by grants
- * Scope of project is interdisciplinary and represents multiple interests
- * Personnel is limited and no one is working full time on the project
- * Access to equipment is limited, indirect, or shared
- * Video budget is low
- * Research and information gathering is a primary part of the project
- * A motivating factor is continued or improved community service and maintaining visibility and public relations

Over the last twenty-five years or so a new awareness of and sensitivity to ethnicity has developed in the popular consciousness. The total scope of ethnic expression, while not dependent on the media, can be well served by it in the promotion of ethnic awareness and cross-cultural education and understanding. The manner in which ethnicity is expressed through the various media is not an unexplored avenue and media producers can be both a service and a disservice in this area. Producers of the most widely disseminated and influential media have often been taken to task for transgressions against a pluralistic society. This has happened not only with producers of theatrical films and prime time television, but with producers of educational media as well. Those in academia can be just as guilty of such transgressions as producers of kitsch and mass culture. One of the purposes of the Birmingham Culture Center was to facilitate multi-cultural awareness and preserve ethnicity.

The Birmingham Project included media prescriptions at the outset. Initially, two projects were to be produced. The first was to be an overview of the culture center project. The specific medium for this project was not named. The second project was to be a videotape about the Birmingham community to be used in multi-cultural courses at the high school and college level. As it turned out, neither of the two originally proposed projects were produced. However, work was begun on the latter. Video is more affordable these days but that is not to say it is cheap. It is more portable but it is not easy. A lot of time, money, and work may be spent unnecessarily if the video objectives are not firmly established and agreed upon prior to any actual production.

During the first quarter term of the Birmingham project raw videos were made of nine activities that took place in the Birmingham neighborhood. The camera was taken on location eleven times, and in addition to recording the actual event bits and pieces of video oral history were obtained as well. But the decision to drop this work was made in favor of collecting video oral histories. However, these earlier tapes were not erased. The new video prescriptions called for ten unedited interviews. The entire interview was to be preserved intact from beginning to end with no deletions. These were not intended to be used in the public library's videotape lending program, nor were

they for use in the classroom. These tapes were meant to be kept in the Toledo-Lucas County Library's Local History Department for research purposes.

After these ten oral histories were completed there was still nothing that could be used in the classroom. It was at this point that the program "Community, Culture, Church, and Change" was developed. This writer is not an historian or ethnologist interested in video as raw data, but rather an instructional designer who uses video to direct the learner's attention. This videotape was by no means intended to be an ethnographic video, nor can it be termed an in-depth documentary. It was produced as an educational video, with the intent of providing a brief and basic insight into a Byzantine parish. The target audience consists of those who know little or nothing about Byzantine Catholics in the United States. It is a simple treatment, an unpretentious minimalist production that covers seven basic areas. The segments cover a brief history, beliefs, icons, liturgical celebrations, group food preparation, pysanki egg decorating, and the blessing of Easter baskets. It is a straightforward piece, the goal of which is to aid cognitive and affective learning. By providing a small organized body of information--knowledge about the Byzantine Church--it serves as a vehicle for thought and further learning. It was also meant to affect attitudes such as appreciation for and understanding of ethnic and religious values.

This program was developed with a mind to some of anthropologist Edmund Carpenter's observations in Oh What a Blow That Phantom Gave Me! Carpenter's book is an analysis of how visual media affect primitive people newly introduced to media, as well as those who live in a highly mediated society. Carpenter and his team first used a telephoto lens to film people in New Guinea who were unaware they were being observed. While continuing the filming one of the team stepped forward to observe the activity but did not interrupt it. Finally, the camera was set up at a closer range while the camera operator urged the people to continue with whatever they were doing. There was little behavioral difference between the first and second situation. The third was markedly different.¹

Much of what was videotaped for "Community, Culture, Church, and Change" was also being observed for the first time. There can be no certainty as to how or if behavior was changed since this was also the initial observation. There is no denying that once the camera is turned on the situation changes. But there are ways to minimize this effect of self consciousness. No one was asked to do or refrain from doing anything. And since this wasn't Hollywood there was no reason to inform everyone that the recorder was rolling.

The one asking questions can be careful not to change his/her behavior according to the on/off condition of the camera/recorder. Questioning can be done in a casual way and kept open ended. This way the questions can usually be edited out because the one answering will not be giving terse yes and no replies. If the camera operator is not always peering into the viewfinder no one realizes when the camera is on or off. Sometime a cover shot can be

¹ Edmund Carpenter, Oh, What a Blow That Phantom Gave Me! (Toronto: Bantam Books, 1974), p. 142.

locked down for a while and the camera operator can move away from the camera every once in a while. A long microphone cord is also useful because it enables the one doing the questioning to distance him/herself from the camera. If the interviewer can be unobtrusive about the microphone and behave as if there is no camera, the participants often key into this behavior. There was never any pretense that the camera wasn't there; its presence was merely downplayed.

One of Carpenter's quotes could drive fear into the hearts of those who do cultural documentation. He states, "We use media to destroy culture, but first we use media to create a false record of what we are about to destroy."² This may be overstating the case but danger does lurk in the use of media, and there is good reason to pause and reflect on Carpenter's observation. A place, a neighborhood, a people can become distorted by media and over mediating may lead to overwhelming distortion. With film and video, distortion occurs as soon as the hot lights are turned on. The presence of cameras is obtrusive but it need not destroy; false records are only created by deliberately manipulating media to conform to preconceived notions, or by trivializing or sensationalizing reality.

The intent of this video was to show that here was a religious and ethnic culture that was consciously struggling to maintain itself. Their participation in this video was part of this conscious effort to preserve tradition. People in a super mediated society like the United States are very sophisticated about video/television. It is almost as if they intuitively know what makes for "good video" because they watch it. The idea of doing a videotape was first presented to the pastor. Once the premise of the video was communicated to the members of the parish they went out of their way to be of assistance. They knew the message they wanted to relay. When the raw video was taped it was more a producer/client relationship than that of observer/observed. They were not so much the subjects of a video as they were its co-producers with a point of view to share. They provided subject matter expertise, stage directions, commentary, and useful suggestions.

The women were particularly helpful in that they described the entire kolach baking process by offering every detail--where, when, what--right down to the signing of the Byzantine cross on the raw dough. They were proud of their religious heritage and ethnic traditions and wanted to share this. The signing of the cross on the dough would have been missed totally had they not mentioned it because it is a very simple and quick action. The video was ultimately narrated by a parishioner who was asked to approve the script for veracity.

Could Carpenter conceive of a situation whereby media is used to help preserve cultures? Is it possible to reverse cultural erosion by showing what is at risk? Is it imaginable that the camera, with its lure of potential semi-immortality, might encourage the hesitant person to attend a traditional function that she/he was about to discount as a useless remnant of the past? Could the camera's eye help young people see the value their heritage and the role unique traditional rituals play in life?

² Ibid., 102.

Media need not always destroy culture but it is a fine line media producers and scholars walk when they try to provide cultural analysis. When attention is drawn to some person, place, or thing there is always a danger that a new phenomenon, or an unexpected or perhaps even undesired outcome may emerge. When someone or something is brought out of near anonymity, that person, group or thing is almost immediately at risk. A new status is created and along with it is perhaps the fear of fad or the scrutiny of curiosity seekers. This need not happen on a grand scale to cause problems. Carpenter writes, "We accept that culture and language and other man-made patterns alter experience. Even to observe is to alter, and to define and understand is to alter drastically."³

The first step toward scripting was to develop a treatment for some issues so that drastic alteration might be softened. St. Michael's is in the throes of its own controversy. There is the old church in the old neighborhood and a new church building and activities center located in a nearby suburb. At issue is whether the old church will be sold. Some think a sale would constitute the desertion of the old neighborhood and the parish's heritage. Others see the sale as moving on, growing, and serving more people. The issue needed to be raised because it is not an uncommon phenomenon, but it did not need to be debated or least of all resolved. Had this been a video for use in a political science class on urban studies it would have been appropriate to include it but it seemed inappropriate to focus on the issue and nearly unethical to adopt the stance of an investigative reporter.

Byzantine beliefs had to be explored carefully. This required a much different treatment than the traditions of folk art and food preparation. When groups collide it is rarely because of differences in preferences for a particular bread or sausage recipe. The purpose of the video was clearly not evangelization, but the belief system was an integral part of the program. It was decided to keep detailed belief analysis to a minimum. The more detailed the analysis the greater is the possibility of distortion. There was not enough time to truly delve into the very being of Eastern Christian thought.

Being Byzantine is more than pysanki, kolach, kolbasz, and incense. Video, because of its limitations of time, may chip away at the culture in bits and pieces but unlike print it can capture a visual spirit outside of time and space. It is hoped that this video spirit conveys more than mere "busyness." It is tempting to accuse video of reducing culture to what is colorful or what makes "good video," but it cannot be denied that video excels when it comes to the human face. The human face can convey much more than what can be put into words.

Some of the religious beliefs were woven into the piece on the art of pysanki. This segment not only included a good overview of the egg decorating process but revealed bits and pieces of the Byzantine belief system in a "natural" way. Use of the Jesus prayer, explanation of the Trinity and various Christian symbols found their way into this segment. It was decided that since much of the tape showed interaction with icons that this belief system should also be explained. If this was to be an aid to cross-cultural under-

³ Ibid., 19.

standing then the subject of icons had to be raised. Many Christian sects perceive such icon interaction as the worship of grave images.

It has been a struggle to remain Byzantine in the United States. The pressure to conform is largely due to the fact that Christianity in the United States is based on Western spirituality and thought. Byzantine immigrants were truly "strangers in a strange land." Very often they could not even turn toward the established Roman Catholic churches for help. Byzantine parishes, by their very nature, were ethnic enclaves because their liturgies were conducted in the vernacular of the home country. Roman Catholics were united by the common liturgical language of Latin. Today English is the liturgical language of American Byzantines and "geneological charts" of the Catholic Church now show an American branch of the Byzantine rite. Previously, Byzantines in the United States were divided according to their liturgical languages and/or home countries. St. Michael's reflects this change. It is the only Byzantine church in Lucas County, and it serves Byzantines of many ethnic backgrounds. The sign outside of the suburban church bears no reference to the parish's original Hungarian ethnicity. It states only "St. Michael's Church."

Some left the Byzantine Church because of the Vatican ruling against a married clergy in the United States. Most of these became Orthodox. Others left because it was somehow considered more "American" to be Roman Catholic. Many people at St. Michael's mentioned that their children left. Oddly enough, when the video was finished, some of these same children were eager to have copies to show their children. This is not very different from another of Carpenter's observation, "Among the Ojibwa Indians, young people listen to tape recordings of grandparents stories though they don't want to listen to the grandparents telling the same stories in person."⁴

Perhaps these children are interested because "outsiders" thought the activities interesting enough to videotape. Lazarsfeld and Merton suggested in 1948 that one function of mass communication is status conferral.⁵ Perhaps, in the case of video, conferral of status does not rely so much on its mass distribution as it does on the medium of television itself. Video may very well be important to the survival of the oral tradition and family heritage in the near technological future. Grandparents of tomorrow are just as apt to hand down video tapes as they are stories, family bibles, and tintypes.

"Community, Culture, Church, and Change" belongs to a genre of video made possible by improved accessibility. It is an example of home grown video that was produced without a big budget or the intent of marketing or wide distribution. This project evolved because of need. This need was for something that could be used in the classroom and could be done simply,

⁴ *Ibid.*, 19.

⁵ "Mass Communication, Popular Taste and Organized Social Action," cited by Donald F. Roberts, "The Nature of Communication Effects," in Wilbur Schramm and Donald F. Roberts, ed., *The Process and Effects of Mass Communication* (New York: Paul F. Lazarsfeld and Robert K. Merton, 1948), p. 379.

quickly, and with little expense. There were several practical reasons for focusing on St. Michael's. It was the only European ethnic church in the neighborhood that hadn't been included in the previous tapings. If the old church was to be sold then it was important to visually preserve what might shortly become "history." The two locations added to the potential visual variety by providing a contrast between the new and old. The two churches were smaller than the other churches and lighting and camera placement were much easier. Video is a medium of motion and relies on movement for interest. The Byzantine rituals are visually rich and far from static. Another reason for concentrating on the Byzantine church is that they are a minority and there would be more people for whom this information would be new. Curiosity can be piqued by what is unfamiliar; and to be curious is to be motivated, which is a prerequisite for learning.

The Easter season provided a perfect motif and background against which the Byzantine story could be told. The liturgies and other preparations for the holyday offered a variety of activities within a short time frame. Since there were only seven activities to be shot more tape could be used per event than could be had there been fourteen, or twenty-one. This helped smooth out the video and prevent a "news clip" effect. When covering activities that cannot be reshot it is important that the camera operator try to keep three things in mind. First, shoot as if the camera is always hot. Use smooth zooms and pans because one never knows what shot will ultimately be used and the perfect segment may be ruined by a zoom that is too rapid, or a dysfunctional swish pan. A second factor for the camera operator to consider is that each change in a shot should be held for at least ten seconds, preferably twenty. The reason for this is that a long piece may be needed and a shot that continuously zooms or pans is not very aesthetically pleasing. Also it is very disconcerting to find that perfect cutaway and discover it is only two seconds long. A final and also important consideration is not to edit with the camera or turn it off and on each time a shot is changed. Sometimes a camera operator may get so caught up in getting a visual that he/she inadvertently chops up some very good audio that could be used.

Using Easter as the motif imposed a natural limitation on both the shooting schedule and the amount of tape used. Printed copies of the liturgies were obtained beforehand so the most important aspects of a service were anticipated. Those times during the liturgy that were not vital were used to pick up cutaways and close-ups. It is important to try not to overshoot, especially when working with a low budget. If thirty hours of tape are shot then it's going to take at least thirty hours or usually more to review and log it. Costs have increased not only in tape time, but editing time and personnel time.

The camera was taken out a total of eleven times. This included all cutaways, interviews, and narration. Shooting sessions averaged about three and a half hours. About seven hours of tape were used. The sequence of events was such that there was minimum wasted effort. First the raw video was taped of all events or activities. This tape was reviewed and logged. Particularly good sections and voids in content were noted. The interviews were then taped. These interviews were intended to complement the previous video or to fill in any gaps in content. A rough edit was made and any gaps in content or visuals were noted. At this point a script was written to include

transitions, voice overs, and on-camera shots. A shot sheet was drawn up of all needed cutaways. Both the narration and the cutaways were taped four months after the original taping at Easter.

For those who have never planned for video production before, there are a few things to consider that may help minimize the "Murphy's Law" effect. There is no need to go any further than establishing intent and content in the initial stages. After this is established appropriate media personnel from various departments within the institutions can be called in to help clarify questions of time, money, equipment, production staff, and method of dissemination. The importance of this step cannot be overemphasized. This should happen before any grant is written or funds requested because the risk of underbudgeting video production can have frustrating if not disastrous consequences.

The time required for even a modest project is substantial. The following is as accurate an assessment as possible of time spent on this production.

Preproduction research (includes scouting locations, pre-interviews and reading literature)	30 hours
Script (includes researching, writing, typing, cue cards)	130 hours
Time on Location (personnel time - producer/director/interviewer (42), second interviewer (4), camera operator (42), second crew member (12)	42 hours
Reviewing tape, assessment, logging	21 hours
Pre-edit	25 hours
Final edit	68 hours
TOTAL PERSONNEL TIME	374 hours
TOTAL EQUIPMENT TIME	156 hours

It is important to establish what kind of format will be used. "Community Culture, Church, and Change was recorded, edited, cablecast, and played back on 3/4 inch tape. Once the format is established it is a good time to discuss amount of tape to be purchased or borrowed. Even a low budget production should have enough tape to shoot at a ratio of five or seven to one. Even more tape might be needed if the work is unscripted. It is also important to establish whether the project will need the original raw video, that is, the first generation video. If avoidable it is best to refrain from using dubs at this stage.

Once the major equipment questions have been answered it is time to determine what kind of equipment access the project may expect. In order to

log raw video it is best to review the tape on a machine that times to the second and has a search function. It is helpful if the project has easy access to such a machine because it may be too costly or impossible to review tape at an editing booth. It is important to log the tape the first time it is reviewed. Subsequent reviews can be used to improve the log, but to simply watch the tape without logging is a luxury. A good log can save a lot of time and can make it possible to write a semi-scripted tape and plan out editing away from a machine. Access to editing and camera equipment is limited only by time and money and one needs to know how much of both the project will require. Use of equipment requires personnel. Video is a group art and more than one person is needed to work on a video project. Field production is the time one person cannot do all the work. One person can write, produce, review, log and edit if necessary but rarely will one suffice in the field.

The style of production can influence the cost of the project. Doing cultural documentation and producing a fully scripted program are almost mutually exclusive concepts. Having no script at all, however, is expensive. Semi-scripting is very feasible and probably the most cost effective way to go. At the other end of the spectrum is non-narrated video verite. This is a viable option but this writer does not suggest it for low budget educational video. It causes too many problems with cost effectiveness because there is a tendency to overshoot. Also when the purpose is education, that is when the viewer is supposed to learn some specific thing, video verite falls short. As a vehicle of education or instruction video verite tends to be weak in areas such as directing attention and informing the learner of the objective. This approach does not sufficiently isolate what is to be learned, and it can be a very subjective experience for the viewer. Research into visual literacy, learning psychology and video editing is not so advanced as to allow video verite to be used as a reliable educational vehicle.

Low budget productions can have very satisfying results. The goals of this video were simple. The first was to produce a video that was useful in the classroom. The day after the program was first cablecast a high school teacher called to request a copy. This was not only unsolicited business but it was not even anticipated. The second goal was to produce an interesting program. After it was cablecast it was later shown under less than desirable conditions at the Birmingham Culture Center where about fifty people watched in attentive silence. There were many positive comments. Some were from people who found it interesting and informative even though they lived in the neighborhood for years. One person remarked that she was surprised that it was just like "real television." She watched the cablecast and was expecting much less from a low budget local production.

But the most important goal for this writer was that the video be as true and as real as possible. The first two goals would be poorly served if this goal was not met. One man, the son of the last married pastor of St. Michael's, commented that he was surprised that someone who was not Byzantine could put together a program that conveyed the Byzantine story so well. To meet this goal was the most important and it could not have been done without the help of the people of St. Michael's. Their openness, honesty, and willingness to help was the greatest of contributions to a low budget production.

CONCLUDING SYMPOSIUM OF PRESENTERS

Summary

by

Dr. Mark B. Kinney
Professor, University of Toledo

Mary Sarabia
Doctoral Candidate, University of Toledo

Introduction

On Monday, May 19, 1986, the Birmingham Cultural Center held a symposium attended by members of the Birmingham Community, academicians, historians and librarians. This event was the culmination of the 1985-1986 lecture series concerning the preservation of Hungarian Culture and the roles of community institutions in achieving preservation.

Symposium Participants

Participants in this symposium included:

John Ahern, Professor at the University of Toledo and Director of the Birmingham Cultural Center
Judy Balogh, Teacher
Thomas Barden, Ph.D., folklorist
John Bistayi, President, Birmingham Neighborhood Coalition; Chairman, Birmingham Festival
Ann Borics, Birmingham resident
Ronald Burdick, Director of The Maumee Valley Historical Society
Rose Dandar, Member of St. Michael's Church; Birmingham Resident
Yolanda Danyi-Szuch, Author, History of St. Stephen's Church
David Guip, Professor of Art, University of Toledo
Rosemary Johnson-Kurek, Producer, "Easter Traditions at St. Michael's Church," The University of Toledo
William Kertesz, retired fireman, Birmingham resident
Andrew Ludanyi, Professor, Ohio Northern University
David Noel, Public Relations, Toledo-Lucas County Public Library
Ronald Randall, Professor, University of Toledo
Mary Sarabia, Graduate Assistant, University of Toledo
Baba Ujvagi, Birmingham resident, Director, Magyar Dancers
Jerry Vasko, Actor, Abauj Bethlehem
Paul Yon, Archivist, Bowling Green State University
Mark Kinney, Professor, University of Toledo

Flow of The Day

The first order of the day was to have Dr. John Ahern provide an overview of the lecture series and to raise questions which were surfaced through them. The group then responded to a series of topics which were relevant to the issue of preservation. In so doing, the group developed three topics which they saw as central to the questions regarding ethnic continuation. The questions were:

1. Why is ethnic preservation important?
2. What needs to be done to accomplish ethnic preservation?
3. How can ethnic preservation be accomplished?

Below in this report will be a more in-depth discussion of the questions which the symposium raised.

A Brief History of the Birmingham Neighborhood

Birmingham, primarily a Hungarian settlement, was colonized in the early 1890's by employees of a Cleveland based foundry which had located in Toledo. Within ten years the community had grown to about 2,000 people supporting four churches: St. Stephen's Catholic Church; the Hungarian Reformed Church, a Calvinist denomination; St. Michael's Byzantine; and Holy Rosary Catholic Church, located on the northern border of the community, which maintains a Slovak and Italian identity.

The community remained intact until the advent of World War II. Prior to the war Hungarian men employed in the Front Street foundries shopped in local community stores for groceries, drugs, furniture, clothes, etc. World War II took most of the available men outside the ethnic community and introduced them to different parts of the country, the greater American culture, educational opportunities and employment.

After the war, property for housing was depleted and they began to move to other parts of the city. By the 1950's and 1960's, Oregon, a new eastern suburb, began to develop a short distance from Birmingham and many of the descendants of the original settlers moved to the suburbs. Even though they moved outside of the ethnic community they maintained close ties with the community.

By the 1980's, the community had changed, the older Hungarians were dying and many younger ones had re-located to the suburbs. New members of the community, attracted by low rentals, were frequently unable to identify with or understand the Hungarian culture.

Issues Surfaced During the Symposium

Several underlying questions and issues were surfaced during the deliberations of the participants.

1. What do we mean by "ethnic preservation?" Does it entail the continuation of the cultural artifacts and skills alone, or does it also include the continuation of the "way of life"?
2. What difference is made by the shift from a non-self-conscious adherence to a cultural way of life to a conscious effort at cultural continuation?
3. What depth of preservation is possible when a significant proportion of the descendants of the immigrants are committed to living outside of the Birmingham neighborhood?
4. What will be the result in Birmingham when the first generation is no longer alive to contribute to the ethnic way of life?
5. What will happen if and when the churches are no longer a significant contributor to the Hungarian traditions?
6. What will be the effect of the shift from a neighborhood culture typified as Hungarian and Slovak to a preserved Hungarian culture which happens to have its roots within Birmingham?

With these questions in mind, the remainder of this report will describe the events of the day and the resulting conclusions.

The Struggle to Define Our Task

Determining answers to a question such as how to achieve ethnic continuation or ethnic preservation is not the easiest of tasks. It is therefore not surprising that it took three tries before a clear direction was achieved. At first we attempted to identify three categories: who benefits from preservation, the economic issues, and the value of preservation. However, in subsuming the various kinds of questions under these three headings those in attendance were not satisfied with that approach to forming discussion groups.

Next came an attempt to identify five topics: a) methods, b) values, c) problems, d) descriptors, and e) recommendations. Once again there was not a consensus on this set of topics. We all did agree that the last item was somehow different than the others, and should be dealt with by all discussion groups.

With this work completed, the next suggestion brought the group together. It was suggested that there be three general topics.

1. **Why** -- Including, why do people preserve, is it worth while doing, should society be concerned that it be done, who leads the struggle to do so, what are the goals and purposes of doing so, and who benefits from doing so?
2. **What** -- Including, who are the tradition bearers, how are they reinforced, who leads the struggle for preservation, who are the opponents and supporters, what is the difference between unself-conscious heritage and self-conscious preservation?

3. **How** -- Including, how do current events such as what is said in journals, events such as the Statue of Liberty Celebration, and news events enhance cultural continuation, who leads the struggle, who are the supporters and opponents, is ethnic heritage worth saving?

The Final Group Results

The "How group" reported the following information from their discussions. In response to the question "Who leads the struggle?", they identified the local groups which were powerful in Birmingham. Such groups as the East Toledo Organization, the Birmingham Coalition, the local churches, the festival committees, the Birmingham Hall of Fame, and the Hungarian Club all were seen to play a part. They use resources involving the older individuals who have a feeling of attachment to the neighborhood and involve many younger persons in the projects. It was clear to this group that with more money more could be done.

In response to the question concerning current events, the group noted the effect of the 1956 revolution in Hungary. This brought the local people together as they attempted to provide refuge for the immigrants. It helped strengthen traditions by focusing attention on the traditions and bringing people into the neighborhood who had a closer tie to those traditions. It brought a new richness to the community and helped the neighborhood gain a new identity within Toledo.

In response to whether ethnic heritage is worth preserving, the group discussed the difference between seeing preservation in terms of cultural artifacts and skills, versus the "way of life." The group questioned how to get the younger generation involved in the "way of life" activities. The group wondered how to pass the traditions and interest in the traditions on to the young. How do we expand the community participation? Where do we find an issue to focus upon?

In response to the question "why people preserve?", the group said people preserve for a number of reasons. They may do so to please their parents, because they have declared a personal commitment to do so, or they've decided it is important to pass on the traditions, or that there is an outside pressure toward doing so from the majority culture. This latter point is especially true in our culture since in the past few years there has been a move from the "melting pot" theory of society to a "multicultural" view. People also preserve because they acquire an interest by traveling to their homeland, an interest in tracing their personal cultural roots and family ties. Some do so because they have an impulse to preserve.

The groups and organizations which assist in this are the churches, community leaders, institutional leaders, artists, bearers of traditional skills, and scholars. Sympathetic public officials and school teachers play their part.

The Final Consensus

The final portion of the day was spent in summarizing the learnings from the session by bringing together in one discussion the various conversations which occurred in the three subgroups. We structured the conversation around the questions represented in the headings below.

What Actions Are Necessary to Achieve Ethnic Continuation?

The symposium members felt that a primary action needed is the continuation of the successful community activities such as community festivals, town meetings, committee structures and cultural activities. This includes the successes that the churches have had in the local community. It was pointed out that the church activities might even be strengthened. The strong church activities of today are subject to pressure because as the "mainstays" of the church reach older age, they begin to take on a less active role. The group felt that publishing family histories and community histories would also be very useful. Language training programs and heritage rejuvenation activities were also highlighted.

The group then spoke of the need to establish within the Toledo metropolitan area the contribution which the Birmingham neighborhood has provided. Providing this recognition with the city government and Chamber of Commerce were two ways mentioned. It was specifically mentioned that a long-range impact statement for the ethnic community of Birmingham would be very powerful in providing the Toledo community with a view of the value of Birmingham. Finally, two other suggestions were made. It was mentioned how important having financial backing is and also how effective it can be to use University resources.

What Resistance Is Likely To Be Encountered?

The conference participants believed that resistance was likely to occur from newcomers and others who do not adhere to the ethnic background of the community. Changing religious leaders and the dormancy of individual ethnic skills also make it difficult to continue the ethnic "way of life." In addition, the second generation's personal striving for integration into the majority culture contributes to the demise of the ethnic culture. The various socializing agencies such as the schools, television, and the belief in American mobility and technology all contribute to this. In Birmingham absentee landlords, personal apathy, lack of time, and the pursuit of the "good life" have all contributed. Within the larger community, inconsiderate politicians and the lack of concern by lawmakers has had its impact.

How Can It Be Countered?

Our discussions focused on teaching pride and family involvement and on the ability to entice individuals to become excited about ethnic continuation by providing rich and interesting opportunities. These opportunities might well be planned to integrate newcomers into the traditions. One specific suggestion was a "welcome wagon." Another was a community bilingual newsletter. Special travel arrangements between the local neighborhood and the original homeland would also strengthen the community.

The conference participants felt strongly that a voice in political decision making is crucial. Birmingham needs a coalition to speak to the politics of Toledo. It needs a group to continually bring pressure to bear to enhance and insure the survival of the unique aspects of the community.

What Are The Most Powerful Resources To Use?

In the group discussion we identified the churches, the Birmingham Cultural Center, the festival committee, the Birmingham Coalition and the Hungarian Club as the most important groups. The schools, churches and the individuals involved in politics were also seen as crucial.

The participants in the symposium were as a whole guardedly optimistic about the ethnic characteristics of the Birmingham neighborhood. While they questioned the depth of the cultural experience which could be created (i.e. the totality of the way of life) they spoke of the elements which could create ethnic continuation. From their various viewpoints they demonstrated an optimism for the future.

Within this overall view there were concerns raised. The writers of this report conclude that the major concerns facing Birmingham are:

1. Effectively making the transitions from the current first generation to the next generation. Within this group there were several second generation participants who obviously demonstrated a depth of interest. This is a signal to the possibility which exists in this area.
2. Effectively planning the steps which will enhance the "way of life." Once again, this is demonstrated in the on-going celebrations and activities of the various special groups like the festival committee and in the involvement of the churches in the cultural affairs.
3. Effectively interacting with the community at large (i.e. Toledo) to share the uniqueness of Birmingham, and to assure that decisions which affect Birmingham are considered and acted upon. Once again there is precedent in current actions for this. Stories were told during the symposium of the successful intervention into political decision making to ensure the continuation of Birmingham. One major success was the retention of the Birmingham Branch Library.
4. Effectively drawing the new residents of Birmingham into the activities which enhance the community as a whole. This is important in terms of the arresting of the deterioration of the neighborhood, and also in terms of ensuring the long term continuation of the ethnic characteristics of the neighborhood in the face of increased purchasing of property by persons who do not have the same heritage as the founders of Birmingham.
5. Effectively developing and continuing the relationships which exist with professionals in history, anthropology, urban affairs, etc, so that the kinds of projects which this symposium created will con-

tinue to be developed. This will continue to focus attention on the questions and concerns and will afford one major avenue for the successful continuation of the neighborhood.

With attention to these issues and the continuation of symposia such as this, we believe that the prognosis for ethnic communities such as Birmingham is quite positive.

THE PRESERVATION OF ETHNIC HERITAGE: HUNGARY'S EXPERIENCE

by

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Editor's Note: This last chapter is unique in that it is not one of our monthly lectures. Professor Joo, of Hungary, visited Birmingham during the year of the series and I had the unique opportunity of discussing with him common concerns about the preservation of ethnic heritage. (I also had the delightful experience of buying this European visitor his first Tony Packo's Hungarian Hot Dog!) The paper that he wrote at my request provides the reader with a Hungarian perspective on the challenge of preserving ethnic heritage.

The East and Central European countries are traditionally multi-ethnic, multilingual units, in which the frontiers of nations constituting cultural communities do not necessarily coincide with the boundaries of states considered as a territorial-political category. The parameters of nations and states in this region have always differed, i.e., unlike in Western Europe or North America, citizenship and nationality (ethno-cultural status) often do not overlap.¹ In Hungary the Germans, Slovaks, Rumanians and Southern Slavs (Croatsians, Serbians and Slovenes) are considered as nationalities (or national minorities).² They are Hungarian citizens but ethnically belong to the neighboring nations. In turn, there are roughly three and a half million Hungarians living as autochthonous population along the borders of neighboring Rumania, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, the Soviet Union and Austria, belonging, on the one hand, to the ethnically defined Hungarian nation and, on the other, to the socio-political reality of the given states to which they were entrusted as a result of the frontier modifications stipulated by the Treaty of Versailles following World War I.

Hungary's neighbors, with the exception of Austria, are characteristically multinational (multi-ethnic) states: the Soviet Union comprises over 100 nations, nationalities, ethnic and ethnographic groups; Yugoslavia is the homeland of 6 Southern Slav nationalities together with a dozen national minorities;

1 Hugh Seton-Watson, Nations and States (Boulder 1977), p. 1-13.

2 This study will use ethnic group mainly for the communities generally referred to as nationalities in Hungarian and East European terminology. Concerning the variety of terms see Francesco Capotorti, Study on the Rights of Persons Belonging to Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities (New York United Nations, 1979), p. 5-10.

Czechoslovakia consists of 2 nations (the Czechs and Slovaks) and 4 national minorities (including the largest group of 700,000 Hungarians); in Rumania the 1980 census put the ratio of non-Rumanians at over 12 percent, with estimates of the largest minority, the Hungarians living mostly in Transylvania, standing at 2 million. Opposed to these figures, in the territory of Austria there is a relatively small number of national minorities, the proportion of Slovenes, Croatians, Hungarians and Slovaks being only slightly over 1 percent of the total population. Although Hungary today is not a multinational state, neither is it homogeneous ethnically. According to the 1980 census, the total population of the country is 10,710,000, out of which 84 thousand people (0.8 percent) claimed another language than Hungarian as their mother tongue. In a numerical breakdown they comprised 31 thousand Germans, 27 thousand Southern Slavs (Serbo-Croatians and Slovenes), 16 thousand Slovaks and 10 thousand Rumanians.³ Since language is the first, though not the only, criterion of ethnic status in East Central Europe, the above data reflect the numerical strength of the four major ethnic groups too.

Despite their relatively small numbers, Hungary's national minorities are spread extensively throughout the land, living in 18 out of the country's 19 counties, even if in negligible numbers and predominantly mixed with the Hungarian population. Due to their historical situation they have a unique consciousness of local identity which is weaker among more distant communities of the same tongue. This is particularly true of the Germans (who live in 16 counties in smaller or greater numbers) and the Slovaks, through Croatian and Serbian ethnic groups live in 11 counties and the capital, Budapest, too. (Rumanians and Slovenes are somewhat of an exception to this rule, as they are generally settled in relatively unbroken communities.) The fact that there are no more than 17 small settlements (villages) in the whole country where over 95 percent of the population is a national minority, constitutes one of the unique objective features of Hungary's national minority policy and the preservation of ethnic heritage. The sparse geographical distribution reflects on the one hand the peculiarities of the original settlements and on the other the results of migration gradually increasing in the wake of decades of industrialization and urbanization.⁴ The ancestors of Hungary's present day ethnic groups immigrated in the late 17th and early 18th century, at a time when they had neither a standard literary language nor a modern national consciousness yet in their homeland. Consequently, the languages (dialects) they speak today are generally archaic versions, are not unified within the country and even as dialectal variations differ so much in certain cases that comprehension is possible only through the literary language. Yet it is only the minority of the nationalities living in Hungary that is familiar with the literary (standardized) language of their homeland. This difference is well illustrated, for instance, by the German literary Hochdeutsch and the local dialectic Mundart, the latter being the collective name of the Bavarian, Swabian and Frank dialects, which have preserved up till now the varying linguistic heritage of the original homeland.⁵ Today, the country's nationalities are virtually bilingual as a result of

³ 1980. évi népszámlálás. A nemzetiségi települések adatai (1980 Census. Data Concerning Nationality Settlements) (Budapest 1983), p. 5.

⁴ Ibid. p. 9.

their relatively small numbers, the mixed settlement patterns and accelerating social mobility (which bears a strong influence on the traditional units of ethnic survival: the village community, the family and personal relations). Those who speak little or no Hungarian at all are few and belong to the elder generations. The nationalities' bilingualism is characterized by the predominance of the nationality language in the older age group and that of Hungarian in the younger age group. School children have to face a particular difficulty, since their bilingualism is usually trilingualism, as they use the nationality's dialect (for family and friendly contacts), the nationality's literary language (partly at school and partly for certain cultural activities) and the Hungarian language (partly at school, but predominantly as the language of social intercourse in their surroundings). This circumstance--occasionally disadvantage--may at times result in serious human and pedagogical problems for both children and teachers.⁶ Examining the nationalities from the point of view of the occupations of active wage-earners, we find a greater proportion of agricultural laborers, as well as skilled and semi-skilled workers--with proportions varying from community to community--than the Hungarian average. Only the German nationality's stratification resembles that of the Hungarian population, and some of their figures, such as the relatively small proportion of unskilled workers, even surpass the national average. According to a sociological survey conducted in the late seventies, 72 to 77 percent of the parents of nationality grammar school children are manual workers employed in agricultural cooperatives, state farms, mines and smaller factories.⁷ These figures go to show that Hungary's national minorities are predominantly (though not exclusively) rural minorities, which makes their situation unique from the perspective of preserving ethnic heritage compared to the sporadically distributed urban ethnic groups in North America, for instance.

Education plays an important role in preserving ethnic heritage, since the school fulfills a linguistic and socializing function as one of the most important institutions besides the family for the passing on of the mother tongue and at the same time conveys basic knowledge and experience which mold ethnic identity. In Hungary there are two types of nationality kindergartens and schools depending on the local circumstances (the numbers of the national minority, its linguistic level and the availability of teachers): the so-

⁵ Claus Jergen Hutterer, Die deutsche Volksgruppe in Ungarn. In Beiträge zur Volkskunde der Ungarndeutschen Ivan Balassa, Klaus Klotz, Karl Manherz (eds.) (Budapest 1975); Sándor Györi-Nagy, "Vergleichende Minderheitensprachforschung im nordwestpannonischen Raum" Pannonia No. 1 (April 1986), p. 4-7.

⁶ This was proved by a sociological survey we conducted in 1983 among the children of four different nationality secondary schools in Hungary. András Bertalan Székely and Rudolf Joo, Anyanyelv és közösségi tudat a nemzetiségi középiskolákban (Mother Tongue and Nationality Consciousness in Nationality Secondary Schools) (Budapest 1986), p. 12, 33-40.

⁷ Marton Thomann, A nemzetiségi anyanyelvi nevelés és oktatás fejlesztésének sajátos feladatai, tartalma és formái a nemzetiségi tanítási nyelvu gimnáziumokban (The Specific Tasks, Content and Forms of Developing Nationality Mother Tongue Education in Nationality Language Grammar Schools) (Manuscript, Budapest State Gorky Library, Nationality Documentation)

called bilingual/nationality kindergarten and school, in which teaching is half in the mother tongue and half in Hungarian, and the so-called language-teaching school, in which all teaching is in Hungarian, while the mother tongue and the literature of the nationalities are taught as compulsory subjects in 4-6 periods a week. In the 1981/82 school year there were 311 primary schools of the latter type (their number grew by 50 in little over a decade) and 19 bilingual primary schools (with a less spectacular growth rate). In addition to these there were 209 national minority kindergartens and 8 bilingual grammar schools, functioning as independent institutions or sections in the mid-1980s, 3 teaching German, 2 Slovak, 2 Serbo-Croatian and 1 Rumanian. Nationality teacher training is channeled through training colleges for kindergarten teachers, as well as the respective departments of academies and universities. Many students from Hungary obtain scholarships to complement their studies abroad in the countries of their mother tongue.⁸ With some neighboring countries, like Yugoslavia, for instance, Hungary has bilateral cultural agreements concerning the sending and receiving of nationality students and teachers, which helps also--on the basis of reciprocity--the cultural and educational contacts with Hungarian minorities living beyond the border. One of the greatest problems of teaching the national minority children in Hungary is the relative scarcity of teachers who know the dialect and the literary language equally well. Although the schools' endeavor is to teach the literary standard of the mother tongue, the initial stage of teaching must inevitably be based on the actual mother tongue of the students, which is a dialect. It was not infrequent in the past--and even recently--to give way to pedagogical volunteerism and simply ignore the latter, teaching nothing but the standard literary language, but this method soon resulted in the decline of interest among the children to pursue their nationality language studies.

As far as the teaching material is concerned, nationality education strives to reinforce both the students' ethnic identity (ethnic consciousness) and citizen's identity (Hungarian patriotism), among other things, by focusing on the centuries-old historical and cultural coexistence and relations of the Hungarians and the neighboring peoples. In the bilingual primary and secondary schools, for instance, complementary history and geography textbooks are used, which concentrate on the past and present of the mother country or nation of the given national minority in particular. In the minority language teaching primary schools the children learn about Southern Slav, Rumanian, German and Slovak folk poetry, tales and customs. When teaching Slovak language and literature, for example, a parallel is drawn between the freedom-loving poetry of the Slovak poet von Janka Kral and the 19th-century Hungarian poet Sandor Petofi. The Rumanian curricula emphasize the joint efforts of the two anti-Habsburg revolutionary politicians, the Rumanian Nicolae Balcescu and the Hungarian Lajos Kossuth, as well as Bela Bartok's contacts with Rumanian folk music. The German curricula contain the Hungarian aspects of the oeuvre of Goethe and Schiller, while the Serbo-Croatian ones highlight the Hungarian contacts of great 20th-century writers such as Miroslav Krleza.

⁸ Lazo Kovago, Nemzetisegek a mai Magyarorszagon (Nationalities in Hungary Today), (Budapest 1982), p. 132-147.

The mass media rank closely after education in ethno-preservation and ethno-development. Weekly magazines are published in the four major minority languages: the Slovak L'udove Noviny, the Serbo-Croatian and Slovene Narodne Novine, the Rumanian Foia Noastra and the German Neue Zeitung. The Pecs (South-West Hungary) regional studio of the Hungarian Radio broadcasts a daily average of 60 minutes in the nationality languages, while three other regional studios broadcast a weekly average of two and one-half hours. The Pecs studio of the Hungarian Television went on the air in 1979 with regular German and Serbo-Croatian programs, while the Szeged studio (South-East Hungary) has been showing Rumanian language programs since 1982 and Slovak language programs since 1983.

Traditional folklore and folk culture continue to play an important role in the life of nationalities in Hungary, dance ensembles, choirs and bands being particularly active among local cultural and educational organizations. Though their importance is undoubtable in the expression of ethnic identity, they cannot become crucial issues in the late 20th century, since this "folklorization" would pose the danger of turning towards the past exclusively, thus degrading the whole of this community culture.

The literature of the national minorities in Hungary offers only a modest output, due primarily to numerical features, so the minorities' need for books is met from abroad, first of all the "mother nations." The cause of nationality libraries was for a long time one of the more neglected areas of nationality policy in Hungary, but has been given more attention lately: a network of lending libraries has been set up and so-called summer reading camps have been organized for nationality students as well. Writers, scientists and teachers from the "mother nations" are regularly invited to give lectures and help develop the mother tongue skills of the participants. The above leads us to the examination of the international role of ethnic cultures. Hungary's principal ambition is that the nationalities living in Hungary as well as the Hungarians living in the neighboring countries should serve as a bridge between these countries in the cultural sense.⁹ This is why Hungary encourages the cooperation of frontier zones with an ethnically mixed population with the corresponding areas of the neighboring countries and generally supports direct contact between the minorities and the mother nations. Unfortunately, not all countries hold the same opinion regarding the national minorities on their territory and are not equally prepared to take a common stand in their interest. In this respect relations with Rumania are the most strained. The importance of national minorities and the inter-state role of regional cultures was stressed in recent years by many prominent international forums, such as the 1975 Helsinki conference on European security and cooperation, the 1985 Ottawa conference on human rights and the European Cultural Forum held in Budapest in the same year.

⁹ Rudolf Joo, "National Minorities" Hungarian Digest No. 6 (December 1980), pp. 69-70; Andrew Ludanyi, The Education of Ethnic Subgroups in Contemporary Hungary (Manuscript Ohio Northern University, Ada, Ohio U.S.A.), p. 13-14.

Transforming some of the language teaching primary schools into bilingual schools wherever the circumstances allow will be one of the principle tasks of preserving and developing different ethnic cultures in Hungary in the years ahead. As a first step, environmental studies ("our district") and music in the lower forms and history, geography and biology in the upper forms, as well as language and literature, of course, will be taught mostly or exclusively in the minority's mother tongue. This far-reaching program may come up against not only the already-mentioned shortage of teaching staff and linguistic difficulties, but the insufficient motivation (interest) of the parents and children as well. Seeing that the latter educational form means a certain extra burden for them it is questionable whether ethnic self-consciousness alone is enough to compensate for it. Up until now the attention paid to the "utilitarian" aspects of learning the languages of the national minorities (and at the same time of the neighboring countries) has left much to be desired, despite the fact that the ever-increasing number of international contacts calls for more and more foreign traders, tourist guides, customs officers, interpreters and translators who speak Slovak, German, Serbo-Croatian, Rumanian and Slovene, and nationalities could make use of their bilingualism and double culture in these areas to a much greater extent than to date.

It is the interest of all the communities concerned and the whole of society that ethnic heritage should be preserved through a process of gradual modernization and that the conscious acceptance of one's identity should help and not hinder the individual in orienting in and adapting to modern society.

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